THE

PLACID MAN:

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

Sir Charles Beville.

VOL. II.

Facile omnes perferre ac pati. TERENT.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

SECOND VOLUME.

BOOK IV.

CHAP. I.

AN Apology for Novel-readers; which may also ſerve for Novel-writers. Pag. 1

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles Beville writes a Letter; and goes to the Opera. Reflections on Faſhion. 7

CHAP. III.

The Motions of the Clayton Family. A Diſcovery. An Interview. 18

CHAP. IV.

Sir Charles makes another Diſcovery. Goes to the Play. Critique on Ben Johnſon's Alchemiſt. 30

CHAP. V.

A Ride. A Converſation. A Dinner. 45

CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles viſits Mrs. Stapleton, and walks a-ſhopping with her. 52

CHAP. VII.

Sir Charles forms a Scheme. Remarks on it. Entertains the Barkers at Dinner. Converſation Piece. Diſſertation on Muſic. 58

CHAP. VIII.

Sir Charles receives a Preſent, and writes a Letter of Thanks. 69

CHAP. IX.

Converſation-pieces upon Head-dreſſes, Propriety, and various other Matters. 77

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

Caſtle-building; an Elegy. 85

CHAP. II.

The Party arrive at Stoney-Stratford. Meet a Stranger there, and go to the Play. 92

CHAP. III.

Sir Charles arrives at the Hall, and finds his Neighbours under a great Miſtake. A Compariſon. The Miſtake propagated. The Miſtake rectified. 104

CHAP. IV.

What paſſed at Sir Harry Clayton's after the Arrival of Mrs. Stapleton. 112

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A Converſation Piece. 126

CHAP. VI.

A Walk. A fair Riddance. 134

CHAP. VII.

Various Remarks on Viſiting, and other Matters. 142

CHAP. VIII.

Mr. Norris's Letter. The Reader is introduced into good Company. 149

CHAP. IX.

More Remarks on Converſation. A Hint or two concerning an Order of Men called Jolly-Fellows. 153

CHAP. X.

The Party viſit Lord Timon. Return and ſet out for London. 161

BOOK

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

A ſmall Hint to the Court of Criticiſm. The Deſign of theſe Memoirs; what they were intended to contain, and what not. 171

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles arrives in Town. Viſits Mrs. Stapleton, who informs him of what had paſſed at Sir Harry Clayton's, ſince her laſt Account. 177

CHAP. III.

Various Remarks. Sir Charles and Mr. Norris viſit Mrs. Stapleton, 186

CHAP. IV.

Two Cauſes tried in the Court of Conſcience with different Deciſions. An Ounce of Candour better than a Pound of Wit. A Walk in the Morning the beſt Receipt to cure Cowardice. 195

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A great deal of Buſineſs done in a very little Time, and recorded in a very narrow Compaſs. 204

CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles has an Audience of Sir Harry, and half carries his Point with Miſs Clayton. 213

CHAP. VII.

A ſhort Chapter, containing the Opening of a very alarming Adventure. 222

CHAP. VIII.

Continuation of the Adventure. 228

CHAP. IX.

Concluſion of the Adventure. 237

CHAP. X.

The Concluſion of the Book, with the Reader's Aſſiſtance. 248

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

Sir CHARLES BEVILLE.

CHAP. I.

An Apology for Novel-readers; which may alſo ſerve for Novel-writers.

"*IN this triſling novel-reading age—*
"*At a time when the preſs groans under*
"*the weight of ſo many ridiculous no-*
"*vels——When a heap of traſh in the form*
"*of novels turned the brains of our young peo-*
"*ple——*" Such, my good reader, as I dare ſay you can bear witneſs, are the reflections which every four critic is daily, weekly and monthly throwing out againſt this ſpecies of

writing; and numerous as the authors in it are, I do not recollect that any of them have ever taken upon them to beſtow even a chapter upon the defence of that branch of authorſhip, to which they owe all their reputation, if they have any to boaſt of, and, it may be, all their bread, if they have any to eat. Probably it may be in ſome meaſure accounted for, from the neglect which I took occaſion two books ago to lament, of theſe introductory chapters; for though an apology of this kind might not be ſo eaſily worked into a chapter or letter in the body of the work, yet had this ſalutary cuſtom been ſtrictly adhered to, ſome one, or perhaps many of them, might have been glad to have made uſe of this means to fill up the number of pages allotted to the firſt chapter of a book; as I think the finding a proper ſubject for an introductory chapter, is, next to writing upon it, the moſt difficult taſk belonging to this mode of writing. Poſſibly too, an objection which may be made to theſe chapters in general, would hold good againſt an author's undertaking this apology in particular, namely, the taking up too much of his time. Little a love of fame can brook delay, a love of pudding leſs. But I, who, thanks to my ſtars, am not apt to be very hungry after either reputation or victuals, have choſen to ſpend a few minutes and a few pages

of

of paper in the defence of theſe little detached morſels of hiſtory, to which I acknowledge myſelf very partial. And here I ſhall not pretend to go upon the trite argument of their conveying inſtruction under the pleaſing form of amuſement, and being the natural vehicles of the *utile dulci*; for, though I am as well convinced of the ſtrength of this argument as any one can be who makes uſe of it, and have as high an opinion of this mode of conveying leſſons of virtue and morality as any one can have, yet this is a more ſerious light than I think it neceſſary to view theſe productions in: I would rather look upon them in that of pleaſing and innocent amuſements. Life is full of cares and anxieties; man has occaſion for, and a right to make uſe of, many expedients to make it paſs on with tolerable eaſe. Various are the ſchemes to which he applies for that purpoſe; one hunts, one ſhoots, one plays, one reads, one writes. Scarce any one expects his mind to be made happy by every one of them; happy if it is made no worſe; and in this light what more pleaſant, what more innocent than that amuſement which is commonly called Caſtle-building? By which is meant, that indulging a pleaſing reverie, which without any foundation in reality affords a momentary happineſs from the reflection, without any danger of a proportionate anxiety

from a diſappointment; the too uſual attendant upon any ſcheme of a more ſubſtantial nature. For which ſpecies of amuſement nothing affords ſo good materials as a novel. It is a caſtle ready built to your hands; and furniſhed with every accommodation neceſſary for the beſtowing an hour of that happineſs which the pliability of man's ſpirits fit him to enjoy. It is works of grave and ſolid reaſoning which it is ſaid a man muſt apply for the knowledge of what may be of ſervice to himſelf and others; but works of imagination alone can afford him that amuſement, which (for any thing I know, the greateſt piece of ſervice that can be done him) tranſports him from the regions of, but too often melancholy, truth, to thoſe of happier fiction. To what end does a man purſue any plan of ſtudy, but with a view to increaſing his happineſs by the proſpects it opens to his ſight? If this is effected by taking a view of the ſmall pictures of human life which dramatic writings, whereof novels are only a more diffuſe ſpecies, why are they not as uſeful works as thoſe which teach him to add to his happineſs by other means? Happineſs founded upon real and ſubſtantial circumſtances in life, is what falls to the ſhare of very few people: but that kind of ideal happineſs, which ariſes from the contemplation of imaginary objects, is

in

in the power of every one, and is frequently no mean relief from the real evils of life. To reaſon any one out of this indulgence, would be to make him wiſe at the expence of one of his greateſt comforts: with Horace's madman he would have great reaſon to cry out, *Pol me occidiſtis, amici.*—A late ingenious moraliſt has expreſſed himſelf better upon this ſubject than I can. "Sweet pliability," ſays he, "of "man's ſpirit, which can at once ſurrender "itſelf to illuſions, which cheat expectation "and ſorrow of their weary moments! long, "long ſince had ye numbered out my days, "had I not trod ſo great a part of them up-"on this enchanted ground. When my way "is too rough for my feet, or too ſteep for "my ſtrength, I get off it to ſome ſmooth "velvet path which fancy has ſcattered over "roſe-buds of delights; and having taken a "few turns in it, come back ſtrengthened and "refreſhed. When evils preſs ſore upon me, and "there is no retreat from them in this world, "then I take a new courſe, I leave it—and, "as I have a clearer idea of the Elyſian fields "than I have of heaven, I force myſelf like "Æneas into them.—I ſee him meet the "penſive ſhade of his forſaken Dido, and "wiſh to recognize it; I ſee the injured ſpi-"rit wave her head, and turn off ſilent from "the author of her miſeries and diſhonours.

" I loſe the feelings for myſelf in hers. Surely " this is not walking in a vain ſhadow, nor " does man diſquiet himſelf in vain by it; he " oftener does ſo in truſting the iſſue of his " commotions to reaſon only."—This paſſage when I firſt read it ſtruck me ſo forcibly, that I immediately ſat down to write an elegy on caſtle-building; chooſing the firſt part of the above quotation for my motto. And, as I look upon it to be the beſt *morceau* my muſe ever produced, I ſhall, as a great favour, reader, treat you with it at the beginning of the next book.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles Beville writes a Letter; and goes to the Opera. Reflections on Faſhion.

WHEN Sir Charles arrived in town, the firſt thing he did was to ſit down and write the following letter to Mr. Norris.

Groſvenor-Square.

—MARRIED next week! nor next year, as far as I can ſee. I am, my dear Norris, juſt at this minute as much vexed as ever I was in my life; and a great deal more than I think I ever ought to be. But patience was not made for men in love. And yet I may as well be patient too, for any good I can do by being otherwiſe. But ſhe is gone, Norris, hurried away into Suffolk at a minute's warning, and whilſt I was abſent too; without even having an opportunity to kiſs her hand to me, and ſay, God be with you. Gone indeed—carried away on purpoſe to be out of my reach; and as I underſtand, that wretch Sir Iſaac in her company; and whether I ſhall ever ſee her again, the golden man who

ſits yonder on his golden horſe knows as much as I do. You muſt know Lord B. has given us more trouble than he intended; for I believe he never had any more thoughts of marrying Miſs Clayton than you have. Whatever at leaſt he might have at ſome time or other, it is become plain that he has not now; which Sir Harry is firmly perſuaded is entirely owing to me, and is therefore ſo exaſperated againſt me, that he is determined, whoever has her, I never ſhall. For which reaſon he took the opportunity of my being abſent (which by the bye I had no occaſion to have been) upon a fooliſh affair which I cannot now ſtay to explain to you, to convey her to the ſeat of her anceſtors in Suffolk; and the officious Lady Clayton (what a horrid animal is your mother-in-law!) has taken care to invite that wretch Sir Iſaac Rupee to paſs his Chriſtmas with them, as ſhe calls it; which, in plain Engliſh, is to make his way with Miſs Clayton if he can. Ay! that *if he can* is the only thing I have to comfort me. The only thing! I lie abominably; I have a letter from her, Norris, full, full of comfort, and I am in hopes, by Mrs. Stapleton's means, to convince Sir Harry that I had no hand in Lord B.'s revolt, if it was a revolt, and alſo to prove to him, that as long as I am ſo happy as to be in poſſeſſion of his lovely daughter's heart,

he

he will not find it an eaſy matter to give any one elſe poſſeſſion of her hand. I expect Mrs. Stapleton in town in a few days, and then——but I tell this tale vilely; I ſhould firſt have told you who Mrs. Stapleton is: her firſt merit is, that ſhe is Miſs Clayton's boſom friend; but, had ſhe not that to boaſt of, ſhe would have more merits of her own than generally fall to the ſhare of one woman. She is the widow of an officer; about one or two and thirty; handſome, and elegant in her perſon and addreſs; chearful and lively in her deportment; and amiable to the greateſt degree in her diſpoſition. She has an eaſy independent fortune, and lives chiefly in town, but by way of variety has now paſſed ſome time at Bath. She will be in town in a few days, and has received an invitation to ſpend ſome weeks at Sir Harry Clayton's, which ſhe flatters me, on my account as well as her own, ſhe intends to accept of. And then, as Sir Harry's waiting will oblige him to come up immediately after the holidays, I am in hopes they may all come up together. In the mean time I believe I ſhall ſteal this opportunity to come down to the hall for a week or two; but this will entirely depend upon the advices I receive from Mrs. Stapleton. If I ſhould come down, I hope you will not refuſe me your company when I return to town; as

I foreſee that I ſhall have occaſion for your advice and aſſiſtance in more points than one. Adieu! I am not quite ſteady enough to write much more at preſent. I feel that I am a little out of humour with ſomething or other, and a good deal out of humour with myſelf for being ſo.

Your's ſincerely,

C. BEVILLE.

Sir Charles found that he could not perfectly acquire that ſerenity of mind which he uſually enjoyed, without ſome aſſiſtance, and therefore he dreſſed and went to the opera. For whenever his mind was out of order, he as naturally had recourſe to muſic, as he had to phyſic for any diſorder of his body. He therefore ſecured himſelf, as he hoped, from all interruption, up in one corner of the pit, and by that time the firſt act of *Ezio* had been adminiſtered to him, he found himſelf much more compoſed; and before the opera was finiſhed, he was in a perfect harmony of ſpirits. He had well-nigh however been diſconcerted by a ridiculous circumſtance, which at another time would only have diverted him: he was liſtening with the moſt delicious ſatisfaction to one of the fineſt ſongs in the opera,

Non

Non ſo d'onde viene, when an elderly perſon who ſat cloſe to him, and who ſeemed to be of the order of men who go to the opera becauſe they have no where elſe to go, juſt as they would go to a coffee-houſe, put his mouth cloſe to his ear, and aſked him what he thought of the king's ſpeech.——If he had aſked him for his money, he would not have ſurprized him more, nor have hurt him half ſo much. He turned round, and almoſt out of temper exclaimed, "Good God, Sir! is "the opera a place to talk politics in?" "Why not," ſaid the ſtranger, "as well "as the church?" The ridiculouſneſs of the anſwer was fortunate for them both; Sir Charles laughed, and recovered his attention; the ſtranger found he was not a man for his purpoſe, ſo turned to his next neighbour on the other ſide. When the opera was finiſhed, Sir Charles turned to the ſtranger and ſaid, "Sir, I aſk your pardon for anſwering "you ſo abruptly; but I have an enthuſiaſm "about muſic which will not let me bear in-"terruption." "I was deceived then, Sir," replied the ſtranger, "for as I did not hear "you ſay one word about the performance, I "concluded you did not regard it." "The "reaſon of that," replied Sir Charles, "is, "that I enjoyed it, which kept me ſilent." "Why then, Sir," ſaid the ſtranger, "I

" may gather from thence that the people who " peſter one ſo much with *bravo! ancora! be-* " *niſſimo! ſquiſito!* and all that, do not enjoy " it; and upon my life I always thought ſo." " Different people," ſaid Sir Charles, " have " different ways of expreſſing their ſatisfac- " tion." " It may be ſo," replied the ſtranger, " but I believe all thro' life, as well as at the " opera, they that talk moſt, feel leaſt. Sir, I " thank you, and I wiſh you a good night; " the next time I talk to a man at the opera " upon politics, it ſhall be one who is mak- " ing the greateſt noiſe about the muſic, and " I dare ſay I ſhall think of this converſation." " Pray, Sir," ſaid Sir Charles, who was loth to part with him, " may I aſk what " particular ſatisfaction you yourſelf have in " coming to the opera?" " Why troth, Sir, replied the ſtranger, " if I was not very ho- " neſt, you would puzzle me; but as I am, " I ſhall acknowledge that I have no farther " ſatisfaction in it than what ariſes from ſee- " ing a number of well-dreſſed people toge- " ther, and now-and-then a little amuſement " from the ſcenes and dances; for as to mu- " ſic, I dare ſay you will eaſily believe I " know no more of it than my ſword-hilt, " and care as little about it. Now all this " I tell you, becauſe, as I ſaid before, I am " very honeſt; but I dare ſay, if you was

" to

" to put the ſame queſtion to nine people " out of ten all through the houſe, they would " tell you forty lies rather than acknowledge " as much as I have done; though they might " do it with equal truth: nay, half of them " cannot have ſo much ſatisfaction as I have " in it, becauſe from living conſtantly in pub- " lic, which I do not, they ſee the ſame caſes " and the ſame things every day; ſo that they " have no excuſe but the faſhion." " It " ſeems unaccountable to me," ſaid Sir Charles, " that people who may chooſe their " own amuſements, ſhould ſuffer others to " chooſe for them." " Why then, Sir," ſaid the ſtranger, " you will pardon me, I " hope, but I fancy you are not much con- " verſant in public life; if you was, you " would know that, in this great town, there " are not above forty or fifty people who pre- " tend to judge at all; and they judge for " themſelves and all the reſt of the town into " the bargain. One or two of theſe leading " people ſay, We will go to the opera; and " all the world goes to the opera. Another " party of them ſay, We will go and drink " punch at Sadler's Wells; and all the world " drinks punch at Sadler's Wells. And if " another leading ſett ſhould ſay, We will go " and ſee the people make bricks in Mary- " bone-Fields; all the world would go and

" ſee

"ſee them make bricks in Marybone-
"Fields." By this time the houſe was almoſt empty, and Sir Charles found himſelf under a neceſſity of quitting his new companion, which, as he began to reliſh his converſation, he did with great regret. Whether the gentleman perceived it, or whether he felt ſome prepoſſeſſion in favour of Sir Charles, I cannot ſay; but upon taking his leave, he ſaid, "Sir, if you ever drop in at Munday's coffee-
"houſe in Maiden-Lane, I ſhall be glad to
"drink a diſh of coffee with you." Sir Charles ſaid he ſhould be happy to meet him, and ſo they parted. When Sir Charles got home, he could not help purſuing in his mind the hint which his new acquaintance had given him, and falling into a train of reflections upon the prevalence of faſhion, and the great power which it has over the minds even of ſenſible people. It is ſtrange, thought he, not that I ſhould do a thing, becauſe others do; but that I ſhould approve a thing, becauſe others approve it. It is not ſtrange that I ſhould wear a long coat laſt year, and a ſhort one this; but ſurely it is rather ſo, that I ſhould think a long coat handſome and graceful laſt year, and this year think the direct contrary: and yet it is true. —One would imagine, if there are any fixed principles of beauty, the ſame mode muſt be always graceful and becoming; but yet

that

that cannot be the caſe, becauſe no faſhion was ever invented, however becoming whilſt it was in uſe, which would bear to be ſeen after it was laid aſide by the generality of the world. Perhaps all this may be reſolved into cuſtom; the eye is hurt by what it is not accuſtomed to ſee. Perhaps prejudice in favour of people may give us the ſame favourable idea of their cuſtoms; and from knowing a man to be a man of faſhion and taſte, I conclude that every thing he wears, and every amuſement he is fond of, muſt be in taſte, and faſhionable; and this brings the matter juſt to what my unknown friend ſaid; I not only wear a ſhort coat and go to the opera, but I love to wear a ſhort coat and go to the opera, becauſe ſuch and ſuch people, of whom I have a good opinion, ſet me the example. And thus one man thinks for all the reſt.

But, ſuppoſe I have a mind to exert my reaſon, and think and act for myſelf; ſuppoſe I wear ſuch a coat as my eye tells me is becoming, and I find convenient; and ſuppoſe I go to ſuch amuſements as I feel ſatisfaction from, without conſidering whether I meet my lord there, or his groom; what will be the conſequence of all this?

Shall

Shall I be looked upon as a man of more ſenſe and reaſon than the reſt of the world, who cannot bear the meanneſs of being dictated to; but exert a manly reſolution in thinking for myſelf? Not a bit: the world will look upon me as an obſtinate puppy, and their very objection to me will be my being leſs prejudiced, and leſs led by the noſe than themſelves. Every man therefore muſt ſubmit to be guided by others, and, even in this country of liberty, muſt not perſiſt in having more reaſon than the reſt of the world chuſes to allow him.

In ſhort, if a man will live in the world, he muſt live like the world: and as long as he takes care to ſtop ſhort at matters of indifference, there is no great harm done; only by this means, it becomes a little difficult for a man to determine what he really likes, and what he does not: becauſe, whatever he may think he is fond of in his cloſet, he is not ſure, when he comes into the world, whether he may love it or not.

Now whether a man is obliged in compliment to the world to give up what he does like, as well as comply with what he does not, is a point upon which I ſhall take the

the firſt opportunity of conſulting my friend at Munday's coffee-houſe.

Having therefore determined to go there ſome time in the following day for that purpoſe, he rang for his ſlippers, and retired to reſt.

CHAP. III.

The Motions of the Clayton Family. A Diſcovery. An Interview.

WE ſhall leave Sir Charles to enjoy his repoſe, whilſt we take a ſhort view of what paſſed among the Claytons.

When Sir Harry communicated to his daughter his deſign of quitting Bath, the morning but one after the unfortunate ball, her aſtoniſhment was not eaſily to be deſcribed. It was a manœuvre of which ſhe had not the leaſt ſuſpicion, and which was ſo contrary to her hopes, as well as her inclinations, that ſhe hardly knew how to receive the intelligence of it with proper reſpect to her informer. For ſhe had flattered herſelf that when Sir Harry found, by Lord B.'s behaviour, that he had not the leaſt thought of any nearer connection with her, he would be anxious for an opportunity of ſecuring Sir Charles Beville, as the next eligible match which offered. When therefore ſhe found that he was more than ever exaſperated againſt him, ſhe plainly ſaw Lady Clayton's hand in the buſineſs,

buſineſs, and concluded that ſhe muſt have gained Sir Harry over to her intereſt; and that by this means ſhe ſhould be reduced to the cruel neceſſity of either acting contrary to her father's inclinations, perhaps his commands, or of being ſacrificed to the avaricious views of her mother-in-law. In this miſerable dilemma ſhe flew to her friend Mrs. Stapleton, and told her her ſituation. Mrs. Stapleton comforted her with the hopes that the great affection which Sir Harry had for her, joined to his infinite contempt for Sir Iſaac Rupee, would, when his paſſion began to abate, get the better of Lady Clayton's influence, and diſpoſe him to a more favourable reception of Sir Charles than he ſeemed at preſent inclined to. She promiſed her that ſhe would join them in Suffolk in a very little time, and do every thing in her power to bring Sir Harry to a better temper of mind; and as Miſs Clayton knew that Mrs. Stapleton herſelf had no ſmall influence over Sir Harry, for he had a high opinion of her underſtanding, ſhe had no ſmall hope from her mediation. Sir Charles's abſence therefore was now the principal thing that gave her uneaſineſs. She wiſhed to ſee him before ſhe went, though only to give him an opportunity of repeating once more, what ſhe had heard ſo often, and to acknowledge an attachment to him, of

which

which ſhe knew he had no reaſon to have the leaſt doubt. Yet ſtill ſhe wiſhed to ſee him. The tender *addies* of two people, ſincerely attached to each other, are too delicious moments to be loſt without regret. It was not therefore to be wondered at that Miſs Clayton determined to endeavour by every means in her power to perſuade her father to put off his journey for one day only, for which, as ſhe told Mrs. Stapleton, ſhe had ſome reaſonable plea, as ſhe really had ſome little buſineſſes to ſettle with milliners, mantua-makers, and ſuch ſort of gentry, with whom young ladies have generally ſome operation or other going forward, which cannot always be concluded at a minute's warning.

Mrs. Stapleton having promiſed to ſee her in the evening, Miſs Clayton proceeded to make her attempt upon Sir Harry: but, alas! he was rock, he was adamant; and in the afternoon Mrs. Stapleton received the following billet, incloſing a letter for Sir Charles.

TOUT eſt perdu. Nous partons demain au point du jour. Venez ce ſoir. Helas vous le reverrez!—Dieu ſçait ſi jamais—donnez lui ce lettre, ce foible temoinage—O mon amie, pardonnez un attendriſſement que je ne ſaurois cacher; et pourquoi le cacher de vous? Adieu. H. CLAYTON.

Mrs.

Mrs. Stapleton came in the evening and ſtaid ſupper: ſhe found Sir Harry ſo much out of ſorts, that ſhe did not venture to ſay a word of Sir Charles; but wiſely reſerved her battery till ſhe might have an opportunity of playing it off to advantage in Suffolk, where ſhe promiſed to join the party in about a fortnight.

The two friends parted, not without ſome tears, and by ſix o'clock, in a dark, cold, November morning, poor Miſs Clayton, with her handkerchief in her hand, followed Sir Harry and Lady Clayton into the coach; and in a few minutes turning her back on Bath, envied every butter-woman ſhe met coming to market.

The journey it may be ſuppoſed was not very pleaſant on any ſide. The roads were indifferent, the weather gloomy, and the converſation worſe. It conſiſted chiefly of dark hints from Sir Harry, and ſmart ſarcaſms from his lady; one of which Miſs Clayton frequently could not underſtand, the other ſhe as frequently would not: and as Mrs. Handy occupied the fourth place in the coach, they could not conveniently come to an explanation. To ſay the truth, poor Miſs Clayton was in a very pitiable ſituation. She had encouraged an inclination for a man who was in every reſpect worthy of her, and whoſe character

racter was such as did honour to her choice; and yet, from the avaricious disposition of her mother-in-law, and the strange chimerical views of her father, she had, in their eyes, all the guilt of having engaged in an unwarrantable connection with an unworthy person. Secure in the innocence, and even laudableness of her own intentions, she did not even wish to make a secret of a passion, which, when rightly placed, and prudently directed, does honour to a good heart, and frequently mends a bad one; and yet, so capricious was her lot, that the very sentiments, which the rest of the world, if they were consulted, must have approved and commended her for, the only two people in the world whom she was bound to consult imputed to her as a crime. In this situation she had nothing to hope for, but that time and the interposition of her friend might prevail on Sir Harry, who was really very fond of her, to open his eyes, and give up the thoughts of making his daughter miserable by refusing, what he himself would at another time have thought as good a match as could have offered, merely because he had been disappointed in his hopes of one which really never did offer: but till this change in his sentiments could be brought about, poor Miss Clayton was doomed to suffer all the ill-bred petulance of Lady Clayton, without having

her uſual advantage of her father's countenance to ſupport her againſt it.

In this kind of ſnip-ſnap diſpoſition the family arrived in town, and Sir Harry propoſed ſetting out for Suffolk the day but one following, which indeed was the very day on which Sir Charles arrived in town. By great good fortune, however, ſome buſineſs fell out ſo luckily as to detain Sir Harry two days longer than he intended, and Sir Iſaac arriving the day after him, prevailed on him to ſtay another day, that they might all go down together; ſo that Sir Charles and Miſs Clayton were for three days within a few hundred yards of each other, Sir Harry's houſe being in Upper Brook-Street; and had it not been for an accidental diſcovery, neither of them would have known a word of the matter: which convinces me that there is not that ſympathetic vibration about the heart-ſtrings of lovers, which ſome of the romance writers, of old times, would fain perſuade us there is. I make no doubt but the hiſtorian of St. Amadis de Gaul, or Sir Belianis of Greece, would have informed you that their hero, during thoſe three days, felt a conſtant tremor or palpitation of the heart, which he could not otherwiſe account for, than by ſuppoſing that his miſtreſs muſt be depoſited ſomewhere within reach of the ſympathetic power, and that accordingly

ſearching

ſearching day and night he at laſt diſcovered a trap-door, guarded by a black giant, or a fiery dragon, or an ugly old woman, or ſome ſuch phænomenon, whom having knocked on the head, the door opened of itſelf, he deſcended, and brought off his miſtreſs in triumph. But, reader, I am an hiſtorian of more credit, and therefore ſhall freely acknowledge, that Sir Charles ſlept as quietly in that bed to which, at the end of the laſt chapter, we left him retiring, as if Miſs Clayton had been, as he really thought ſhe was, ſafe and ſound at *Beechwood-Park* in Suffolk. And thither probably ſhe might ſtill have been conveyed without his knowing any thing of her motions, had not fortune favoured him beyond his expectations. Having been fatigued with his journey, he ſlept longer than uſual the next morning, and in order to rouſe himſelf, as ſoon as he had breakfaſted, he ſet out to take a walk through Hyde-Park, and down Conſtitution-Hill, intending at the end of it to call in at Munday's coffee-houſe. When, lo! as he was walking up Upper Brook-Street, he was rather alarmed at hearing a faint ſcream from a dining-room window; when looking up, imagine his tranſport, reader, he perceived that it came from the mouth of Miſs Clayton herſelf. In his firſt hurry he was going to rap immediately at the door; but upon her waving her hand

to

to him, he desisted, and waited a minute to see the event. The signals of lovers always mean something: Mrs. Handy presently appeared at the door, and ushered him into the parlour, with as visible a joy in her countenance as if it had been an humble servant of her own. In a few minutes the door opened, Miss Clayton herself entered, and "Is it "possible!" was uttered by both at the same instant. "How infinitely happier am I," said Sir Charles, "at this moment, than I al-"most expected ever to be again! O Miss "Clayton, if you knew what I have suffered "since I saw you, I am sure you would pity "me; I am sure you did pity me; your kind "letter, for which I return you ten thousand, "thousand thanks, tells me you did." "In-"deed, Sir Charles," replied Miss Clayton, looking down, "had I thought we should have "so soon met again, I believe I should not "have written that letter; but the sudden-"ness of my father's motions made me "dread a long separation from you, and as "your absence was in consequence of my "advice, I could not leave you intirely "without some acknowledgement of my ob-"ligations to you."

"For once then, Madam," replied Sir Charles, "I am more obliged to Sir Harry

" than he intended I ſhould be; but I am not
" abſolutely without hopes of being ſtill
" more obliged to him for an intentional fa-
" vour. Surely, my deareſt Miſs Clayton,
" he cannot be ſo far guided by Lady Clay-
" ton, as to refuſe my offers in preference to
" a man whom I know in his heart he de-
" ſpiſes and abhors; eſpecially as I may with-
" out preſumption hope for your declaration
" in my favour. Can a father refuſe ſuch a
" daughter the wiſh of her heart; and that
" wiſh too in favour of a man, who, how-
" ever unworthy he may be of her ac-
" ceptance, will be bold to ſay, he is not
" abſolutely unworthy of her father's." " It
" would be folly in me," ſaid Miſs Clayton,
" after what I have given under my hand, to
" make any ſcruple of acknowledging my
" partiality to you; I therefore freely ac-
" knowledge that I ſhall leave nothing un-
" tried to ſecure you a favourable reception
" from my father: but, alas! Sir Charles,
" you do not know the impetuoſity of Lady
" Clayton, nor how great an influence, by
" mere dint of teaſing, ſhe can gain over him:
" beſides, he is at preſent firmly convinced
" that you are the occaſion of Lord B.'s with-
" drawing his pretenſions, which has exaſ-
" perated him ſo much againſt you, that I
" verily

" verily believe, was he to find you here now,
" he would forbid you the houſe; which in-
" indeed is the reaſon of my uſing the cau-
" tion I do, leſt any of the family, except my
" own maid, ſhould ſee you."

" I was a little aware," replied Sir Charles,
" of what you tell me, but I was in hopes
" his finding his miſtake with regard to that
" ſhuttle-cock Lord B. might nevertheleſs
" have removed the principal obſtacle to my
" pretenſions; and as I was in hopes he would
" be too wiſe to refuſe one offer, becauſe he had
" loſt another, I had determined to write to
" him by to-night's poſt, to make him an of-
" fer of *carte blanche*, and beg his permiſſion
" to pay my reſpects to him and you at *Beech-*
" *wood-Park*." " This," replied Miſs Clayton,
" would have been a moſt unfavourable junc-
" ture to have put your generous reſolution in
" practice, and for both our ſakes let me in-
" treat you to defer taking any ſtep till Mrs.
" Stapleton has had time to pave the way for
" your reception; for was my father in the
" heat of his paſſion to give you a refuſal, I
" know his pride would never ſuffer him to
" retract it afterwards, however he might wiſh
" to do it." " But," ſaid Sir Charles, " I
" hear that Sir Iſaac Rupee is to be of your
" party this Chriſtmas; can I, my charming

"Miſs Clayton, bear the thoughts of his be-
"ing admitted to the happineſs of attending
"you, and peſtering you with the appear-
"ance of a paſſion which he cannot feel,
"whilſt I am—O my lovely Harriet, that,
"that is too much!" Surely," replied ſhe, ſmiling, "Sir Charles can have nothing to
"fear from Sir Iſaac Rupee of all men liv-
"ing."—"Pardon me, my deareſt Madam," replied Sir Charles, "I have no fears; but whilſt I am baniſhed from you, I think I
"ſhould be angry with a fly that ſettled on
"your hand. You know not, my Harriet,
"how capricious an animal is a man who
"loves as I do." "You have an ill opinion," replied Miſs Clayton, "of my ſincerity, if
"you cannot imagine that I can form a
"pretty juſt idea of it. What are, Sir
"Charles, the capricious delicacies of a man
"in love, to thoſe which a woman feels in
"the like circumſtances?" Sir Charles's heart thanked her at his eyes; he preſſed her hand to his lips, and the converſation grew more and more tender, till Lady Clayton's bell informed them that ſome company, who were with her, were going; and Sir Charles thought it neceſſary to take leave alſo; which he did with no ſmall regret, after having agreed to meet Miſs Clayton and her mother-in-law,

as

as it were by accident, at the play in the evening. For, as neither Sir Charles's pride nor his honeſty would ſuffer him to carry on a clandeſtine correſpondence, he ſaw no reaſon why he ſhould make any ſecret of his being in town, or why he ſhould refuſe himſelf the ſatisfaction of paſſing a few hours with his miſtreſs in public, ſince he could not with prudence do it at her own houſe.

CHAP. IV.

Sir Charles makes another Diſcovery. Goes to the Play. Critique on Ben Johnſon's Alchemiſt.

SIR Charles having taken leave of Miſs Clayton, purſued his walk; but as his mind was occupied by more pleaſing ideas than it had been when he left his houſe in the morning, he had no occaſion to go to Munday's for amuſement; ſo took a turn or two in the Mall, which, as it happened to be a bright, froſty day, was very full. He had not walked long before he obſerved his opera acquaintance ſeated upon a bench, in cloſe conference with a Chelſea-penſioner. Sir Charles touched his hat as he paſſed him: which the old gentleman perceiving, he quitted his ſeat and joined him. "You find me, Sir," ſaid he, as he came up to Sir Charles, "in odd company; "but I look upon all mankind as one great "book; and ſometimes meet with much in- "ſtruction in a page which does not happen to "be ſo fair as ſome others may be. I aſſure you "that

" that dirty blotted leaf, which you found me " ſtudying, helped me to an excellent ac- " count of the war at the latter end of Queen " Anne's reign, and gave me ſome anecdotes " which would have made a figure in the hiſ- " tory of thoſe times." Sir Charles ſmiled at his notion, and told him he hoped he had not broken in upon his ſtudies. " No, Sir, " no," replied the ſtranger, " I had pretty " well read him through; and I wiſh I may " not pay for my curioſity by a fit of the " gout, from ſitting ſo long this cold day, as " it is; but there is one of the things " now in which a man thinks he is obliged " to ſacrifice his ſenſe to the opinion of the " world: my curioſity would make me ſit " down upon a bench in a bitter cold day to " take an opportunity of talking accidentally, " as it were, with that poor fellow, becauſe " my pride would not ſuffer me to take a turn " with him in the Mall." " This," ſaid Sir Charles, " is, I believe, a caſe in point with " regard to an affair which I cannot ſet- " tle in my own mind, and upon which " I determined to take the firſt opportunity " of aſking your opinion. I have at length " convinced myſelf, that it is abſolutely ne- " ceſſary for a man who lives in the world to " comply with many things which he either

" diſlikes or does not care ſix-pence about;
" but is it alſo abſolutely neceſſary that he
" ſhould, in compliment to the opinion
" of others, give up what he is himſelf
" really fond of, and finds ſatisfaction
" in?"

" Why," replied the old gentleman,
" with regard to abſolutely neceſſary, the caſe
" ſtands thus. Every thing is in itſelf inde-
" pendent of the opinion of the world, good,
" bad, or indifferent; if it is good, I am
" bound to do it; if bad, I am bound not to
" do it; if indifferent, I may to be ſure ei-
" ther do it or let it alone: but then if it is
" contrary to the cuſtom and opinion of the
" world, I muſt pay the penalty; which is
" ſubmitting to be called a very particular man.
" If I am ſo happy as to be able to think
" that a trifle, I then ſtand a chance for be-
" ing a wiſer man, a better man, and a
" happier man, than any of my neighbours."
Sir Charles ſmiled, and looked as if he wanted
to ſay ſomething if he dared. " I know your
" thoughts," ſaid the ſtranger, " you long to
" aſk me if I am not a particular man. I
" hope I am; and if I had but reſolution
" enough to get the better of ſome few preju-
" dices, I ſhould bid fair for being a very par-
" ticular man; and by the good temper with

" which

" which you ſeem to indulge me in my hu-
" mour, I flatter myſelf it is a character at
" which you are not ſo greatly ſhocked as
" moſt men of your age and figure would
" be." " According to your own notions
" of the character," ſaid Sir Charles, " you
" pay me a compliment, and in return I can-
" not but acknowledge, that, whimſical as
" the beginning of our acquaintance has
" been, I have a great inclination to continue
" it." " You muſt know, Sir," ſaid the
ſtranger, " that I have been as much a dupe
" to the opinions of the world, and have
" taken notions upon truſt, as much as any
" man who ever lived in it: but I have for
" ſome time begun to ſuſpect that common
" notions were not always founded in com-
" mon ſenſe; and I have lately been ſet right
" in ſo material an article, that I am now upon
" the plan of canvaſſing every cuſtom before
" I give into it; and I don't doubt but in a
" little time I ſhall acknowledge no laws for
" my actions, but thoſe of God and my
" country. I have a ſon, Sir; and he, as I
" thought, played the fool and married, with-
" out my conſent, a girl without a ſhilling.
" According to the common *routine* of life,
" therefore, I concluded that he was ruined,
" that he had taken a ſtep which it never was a

" cuſtom for rich fathers to forgive, and ac-
" cordingly, brute that I was, I turned him
" and his wife out of doors. But by the
" time that they had ſuffered more hardſhips
" than I can bear to recollect, and I more
" pain than I cared to acknowledge, I began
" to doubt whether I had not been a little
" too haſty. By great good fortune, juſt
" about this time my poor boy met with a
" ſingular adventure which brought him to
" the knowledge of an old fellow-collegian,
" who in a good hour undertook to plead his
" cauſe with me. This gentleman, with
" whom I am only acquainted by letter, is I
" find a very particuler man; and in a little
" time, as ſoon, that is to ſay, as my pride
" and obſtinacy could be let gently down, he
" convinced me that the opinion of the world
" in theſe caſes is not worth a ruſh; that my
" ſon was happier in a wife of his own chooſ-
" ing than he probably would have had any
" chance of being with one of mine; that I was
" beſides puniſhing myſelf for his indiſcretion;
" and, in ſhort, he argued in ſo very particular
" a manner, that I ſent for my boy home,
" and ſhall have reaſon to love a particular
" man as long as I live."

" You ſaid, Sir, I think," ſaid Sir Charles,
" that your ſon met with his friend in con-

" ſequence of a ſingular adventure; may I " take the liberty to aſk if that tranſaction " was not at Bath?" " Indeed it was," cried the old gentleman, ſtopping ſhort, and looking earneſtly in Sir Charles's face. " And your " name, Sir," ſaid Sir Charles, " is Barker?" The old gentleman looked aſtoniſhed; but at length recollecting himſelf, " It muſt be ſo," cried he; " you can be no other than Sir " Charles Beville." Sir Charles bowed. " You are," continued he; " why then, Sir, " you are the happieſt man living; for I " know the amiable goodneſs of your heart " ſo well, that I am ſure the ſight you will " ſee at my houſe will be the moſt delicious " treat that can be given you. A whole fa- " mily enjoying the moſt perfect happineſs in " each other, to which your humanity open- " ed the way. Your excellent father, Sir, " laid the foundation for my reformation; " and your moſt excellent friend, Mr. Norris, " compleated it. You muſt, Sir, go home " and dine with me; I cannot be eaſy till I " have done penance for my brutality, by " being preſent at an interview between you " and my children." Sir Charles was af- fected; he could hardly reſiſt the old gen- tleman's importunity; but looking at his watch, and finding it late, he recollected that

his engagement at the play would make it impoſſible for him to dine abroad and return home to dreſs afterwards, ſo making Mr. Barker a promiſe that he would not fail to wait on him the next day, he inquired his addreſs, and took his leave.

It was not late when Sir Charles came to the play-houſe, as you will eaſily imagine; and, conſulting the box-keepers books, he found Lady Clayton's name in the ſtage-box; in one corner of which therefore he planted himſelf, waiting for their arrival, which very ſoon happened. It is not eaſy to deſcribe the ſurprize and ill-humour which aroſe at once in Lady Clayton's face, when, thruſting her hoop in edgeways, ſhe caught a view of Sir Charles, who made her a profound bow as ſhe entered, and offered his hand to aſſiſt her in getting to the front of the box. He was not ſorry that ſhe declined his civility, as he had, by that means, an opportunity of offering it where it was better received; Miſs Clayton, who followed her ladyſhip, made no ſcruple of accepting his hand, and having ſeated her, he planted himſelf cloſe behind them, without taking the leaſt notice of Sir Iſaac Rupee, who ſtood puffing at the back of the box, not a little diſconcerted to ſee his duty performed, and his place occupied, by his old antagoniſt.

Sir

Sir Charles leaning forward, inquired of Lady Clayton with much civility after Sir Harry; aſked how long her ladyſhip had been in town; hoped ſhe caught no cold on her journey, as the weather had been ſo bad; and, in ſhort, ſaid every ſilly, civil thing he could think of, by way of trying to put her in good-humour: but he got nothing more than a half bow, "Yes, Sir;"—"No, Sir;"—"Much "obliged t'ye, Sir;"—and ſo forth; ſo finding there was not much to be done there, he did by his civility as he had done by his hand, and offered it where he knew it would be better received.

Whilſt he was entertaining Miſs Clayton with an account of the particular manner in which he had become acquainted with old Mr. Barker, Sir Iſaac found ſomething or other to ſay to Lady Clayton, ſo giving a nod with his head at Sir Charles, as much as to ſay, "It will be my turn when we get into "Suffolk," he very contentedly ſeated himſelf behind her, and they ſettled who was who, till the curtain drew up.

The play was *The Alchemiſt*. "It is a ſtu-"pid play," ſaid Lady Clayton as the curtain drew up; "it is ſo old-faſhioned," and "damned low," ſaid Sir Iſaac. In the third ſcene, however, they both laughed immoderately

rately at *Abel Drugger*. "Excellent!" ſaid Sir Iſaac. "Inimitable!" ſaid Lady Clayton. "There's ſome humour in this charac-
"ter," ſaid Sir Iſaac. "Pray, Sir," ſaid Sir Charles, "don't you think the humour "lies a good deal in ſeeing Mr. Garrick in "that old waiſtcoat and wig, and that green "apron?"

"Why, Sir," ſaid Sir Iſaac, "if it had "not been a top character, Mr. Garrick "would not have choſen it." "Now I "think," ſaid Miſs Clayton, "that he ra-
"ther choſe it, on purpoſe to ſhew that he "could delight one with any thing; and if "he had taken *Dapper* or *Ananias*, we "ſhould have been as well pleaſed with "them."

Sir Charles ſmiled. Sir Iſaac did not dare to contradict her; Lady Clayton did not think it worth while; and ſo the argument dropped.

In the ſecond act Sir Charles laughed heartily at ſome ſtrokes in the character of *Sir Epicure Mammon:* poſſibly Sir Iſaac thought he was drawing ſome parallel. "You ſeem, "Sir," ſaid he, "to be much taken with "this part; I cannot ſee where the great hu-
"mour lies in cheating a gentleman in ſo "barefaced a manner." "My dear Sir," replied

replied Sir Charles, "in theſe caſes we muſt "feel, not reaſon; humour is a thing of ſo de- "licate a nature, that if it is not felt, it is im- "poſſible to point it out." Sir Iſaac was an- ſwered; an argument above the comprehen- ſion of your antagoniſt, is juſt as good as a convincing one.

"You ſee, Sir," ſaid Sir Charles, when they came to the ſcene where *Mammon* takes ſo much pains to convince *Surly*, "that all "the humour does not lie in their cheating "him, but in the great pains which he takes "to cheat himſelf: and if we look atten- "tively into human nature, we ſhall find that "humour is not yet out of date." Sir Iſaac took a pinch of ſnuff.

"Pray, Sir Charles," ſaid Miſs Clayton, after the act was over, "don't you think the "poet has crouded into his play, with ſome "degree of affectation, rather more of the "ſcience which he meant to ridicule than "was neceſſary?" "Excellently well ſaid, "upon my ſoul," cried Sir Iſaac, and laugh- ed very loud; "what ſay you to that, Sir "Charles?" "Why, Madam," replied Sir Charles, "in this reſpect Lady "Clayton's obſervation upon this play is "very juſt, it is old-faſhioned; that is to "ſay, the ſcience upon which the ridicule is "turned, and which, at that time of day,

"had

" had turned the heads of half the ſtudious
" men in the nation, is now entirely exploded;
" and ſo the pains which the poet takes to
" expoſe the principles of the ſcience loſe
" great part of their effect to us, becauſe
" they appear needleſs. But perhaps, as you
" very accurately obſerve, there may be a
" degree of affectation in it; Ben Johnſon
" was a good ſcholar, and a man of great read-
" ing, it was not therefore to be wondered at,
" in an age when ſuch people were ſcarce,
" that he was willing to ſeize every opportu-
" nity of ſhewing his knowledge, ſometimes
" even at the expenee of his judgment. It muſt
" be entirely owing to this, that in the ſecond
" ſcene of this act he has made *Sir Epicure*
" *Mammon*, in expreſſing his intended luxury,
" have recourſe to all the things in uſe
" amongſt the luxurious part of the Ro-
" mans; as I dare ſay a Lord-mayor's feaſt,
" even in his time, would have furniſhed him
" with diſhes which would have conveyed
" much higher ideas of luxury and epicuriſm
" to his audience, than the paps of a fat
" pregnant ſow dreſſed with a poignant ſauce,
" or the tongues of dormice and camels heels;
" but then he would have loſt the opportunity
" of letting you know what was Apicius's
" diet againſt the epilepſy." " Who was

" Api-

" Apicius?" ſaid Sir Iſaac. " Vy," ſaid Lady Clayton, who was rouſed by the mention of a Lord-mayor's feaſt, " he is one of " the people in that book that Sir Harry is " ſo fond of, becauſe it was written by a lord, " *Dialogues of the Dead*; he, and another man " with a hard name, talk all about eating." " Very true, Madam," ſaid Sir Charles. Miſs Clayton bluſhed, and inquiring who a lady was in the oppoſite ſtage-box, put an end to the criticiſm. " What are theſe; " taylors?" ſaid Lady Clayton, when the third act opened with *Tribulation* and *Ananias*. " Quakers," ſaid Sir Iſaac.—When they came to the next ſcene, where *Subtle* is enumerating the arts and abſurdities of the Puritans, " You ſee," ſaid Sir Charles, " that " Mr. Foote was not the firſt perſon who " made uſe of the ſtage to ridicule the vice or " abſurdity of a religious ſect; for his *Mi-* " *nor* cannot expoſe the hypocriſy and enthu- " ſiaſm of the Methodiſts more, than this play " and the *Bartholomew Fair* of the ſame au- " thor do thoſe of the Puritans." " I " think it is a ſhame though," ſaid Sir Iſaac; " ſuch things ought to be talked of no where " but at church." " Pray, Sir," ſaid Sir Charles, " do not you think that the ſtage as " well as the pulpit may be made to ſupport the

" cauſe

" cauſe of virtue? If ſo, why is not one " vice the object of its cenſure as well as " another? For my own part, I acknowledge " I cannot ſee why hypocriſy and enthuſiaſm " are to be ſpared a bit more than drunken- " neſs or lying." Sir Iſaac took a pinch of ſnuff. The fourth act paſſed without much notice till they came to the laſt ſcene; which Sir Charles obſerved was the moſt exquiſite piece of ſatire that ever was written. " Why " it is nothing," ſaid Lady Clayton, " but a " parcel of people quarrelling." " Very " true, Madam," replied he, " and you ſee " they are all turned upon one poor man; " and therein lies the depth of the ſatire. All " the people, who are cheated by *Subtle* " and *Face*, are joined together againſt *Surly*, " who would open their eyes; the common " fate of thoſe who will give advice, and be " wiſer than their neighbours. You ſee, Ma- " dam, though he only tells them how egre- " giouſly they are impoſed upon, and begs " leave only to be their beſt friend, and ſet " them right, the villains have the addreſs " to give every man a ſeparate cauſe to " quarrel with him, till they drive him out of " doors."

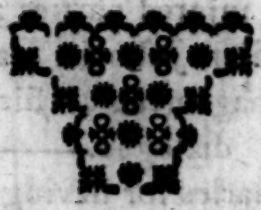
" There is nothing eaſier," ſaid Miſs Clayton, " than for artful people to impoſe

" upon

" upon ſimple ones, except it is to per-
" ſuade them to impoſe upon them-
" ſelves."

The *denouement* in the fifth act afforded them ſome diverſion, though Miſs Clayton obſerved, and Sir Charles could not but acknowledge, that the poet had been deficient in point of poetical juſtice in the concluſion, for *Face*, the chief contriver of all the villainy, is pardoned, and taken into favour by his maſter, who, by the bye, is taken in to make one in the plot, as a reward for his helping him, by means of a trick, to a fooliſh wife, whilſt all the injured parties are left without redreſs. But Ben Johnſon was not ſo excellent in the management of his plots, as of his incidents and dialogue.——Miſs Clayton thanked Sir Charles for having made her enter more into the ſpirit of the play than ever ſhe had done before. Lady Clayton ſaid, that it was called a very fine play; but it was too old for her: and Sir Iſaac perſiſted in his opinion, that it was damned low.—Sir Charles aſked Lady Clayton how long Sir Harry ſtaid in town; and ſaid he would do himſelf the honour of waiting on him; to which ſhe replied with rather more glee than delicacy, " Aye, " but ve go to-morrow morning." Sir Charles

Charles bowed, ſighed, ſaid he was very ſorry, in which he certainly ſpoke truth, and having handed Miſs Clayton to her coach, took a melancholy leave, went home in low ſpirits, ſupped alone, and retired to reſt with that kind of ſenſation which has a mixture of pleaſure and pain.



CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A Ride. A Converſation. A Dinner.

THE next day Sir Charles was not forgetful of his engagement; but as it was a fine morning, he firſt got on horſeback, and, mechanically as it were, turned his horſe's head towards the New-road: not with any hope of meeting with or overtaking Sir Harry Clayton's coach, but merely becauſe the ideas of Miſs Clayton, and the road ſhe had travelled that morning, came into his mind together, and gave that road a ſuperiority over all other roads.—How does the minuteſt trifle acquire value by a connexion with a beloved object! The man who would throw away a pin which fell from his miſtreſs's ſleeve-knot the inſtant before he parted from her, feels not the true idea of love.—When Sir Charles returned from his ride, he dreſſed and went to Mr. Barker's. He was not without ſome little embarraſſment in his mind as he went: he wiſhed the interview with young Barker was over, but more with his wife. His ſpirits were in proper tone for being tenderly

derly affected, and he feared the grateful acknowledgments of an amiable woman might awake his ſenſibility too much for his comfort. He had never ſeen Mrs. Barker: "I wiſh," ſaid he, as his chariot ſtopped at the door, "that I was obliged to her, inſtead of ſhe to "me."—There is a certain *politeſſe du cœur* which makes it aukward beyond expreſſion to ſee an amiable woman in humilating circumſtances: Sir Charles would have looked a lion in the face with leſs pain than a woman who thought herſelf obliged to him. "I "cannot help it," ſaid he to himſelf as he entered the drawing-room door. "I hope "ſhe has neither beauty nor ſenſibility." But, alas! ſhe had both in a ſuperior degree. She was ſitting in the moſt engaging of all attitudes playing with her child; whilſt her huſband, with one arm round her waiſt, was looking up in her face, and enjoying the ſmile of endearment, which increaſed the beauty of it, by ſhewing in it the ſweetneſs of her mind. At any other time how would Sir Charles have enjoyed the picture!—They both roſe up at his entrance; Mr. Barker ſprang forward to meet him with open arms; but checked himſelf with the air of a man fearful of preſuming. Sir Charles met him half way with a hand held out, which he eagerly ſeized. "My

"dear

" dear Mr. Barker," ſaid Sir Charles, " how " happy am I in this unexpected meeting!" " I know, I know you are," cried Mr. Barker. " O, Sir, ſee, ſee the works of " your hands; ſee the woman, the child " which you have reſcued from——" " My " dear friend," interrupted Sir Charles, " let " us only look forward. Permit me to have " the honour of being known to your lady." He advanced to ſalute her; ſhe offered her cheek with a guarded frankneſs, as if ſhe with difficulty reſtrained herſelf from falling on his neck. A tear ſtole down her cheek as he preſſed it with his lips; ſhe made an effort to ſpeak—" O, Sir!"—looking towards her child, was all ſhe could utter. Sir Charles's eyes gliſtened: he took her trembling hand in his; ſhe was not ſorry, as ſhe had need of his aſſiſtance to ſupport her to the ſofa.—After a moment's pauſe, " Forgive me, Sir " Charles," ſaid ſhe, " if I cannot find " words to expreſs my gratitude: I cannot, " Sir, lay open my heart to you, but I can " to heaven; and if prayers can draw down " upon you a return for obligations too " great——" " My dear Madam," interrupted Sir Charles, " do not oppreſs me with ac- " knowledgments of obligations which are " overpaid: if ever man performed his duty

" from

" from a ſelfiſh motive, I may be ſaid to have " done it: is it poſſible to purchaſe my pre- " ſent feelings at too high a price! how for- " tunate then am I, who enjoy them in conſe- " quence of a ſingle act of duty!" "Thus," ſaid Mr. Barker, " thus it ever is with great " minds; thoſe acknowledgments, which, " with others, are the only motive to a ge- " nerous action, form to them the only pain- " ful part of it." " I muſt, I muſt have " no more of this," cried Sir Charles. " In- " deed but you muſt," exclaimed old Mr. Barker, opening the door at that inſtant; " you ſhall not, Sir Charles, have the credit " of new moulding my heart, and making " me deteſt my former ſelf, without being " thanked by thoſe who feel the benefit of " the change." " They have more than " thanked me, Mr. Barker," ſaid Sir Charles; " they have, they will pray for me." " They " have!" interrupted the old gentleman, " what are their benefits to mine? I, Sir, am " the perſon moſt obliged; ſee, Sir, ſee the " preſent you have made me; look at my ſon, " my daughter, and that little innocent wretch, " all of whom I had in wantonneſs thrown " away, and loſt for ever, had not your huma- " nity taken them up and reſtored them to me, " when moſt I began to feel the miſery of my " loſs.

" loſs. And ſhall not I thank you? Shall not " I pray for you too? " Yes, Sir," cried he, ſobbing, " never ſhall one of thoſe days " which you have made happy, or thoſe " nights which you have made comfortable, " paſs without ſuch earneſt fervent prayers " for your happineſs, as I am convinced hea- " ven will not reject. " O, Sir!" continued he, wringing Sir Charles's hand, it is owing " to you that I ever ſleep quiet again." Sir Charles turned to the window.—There is ſomething in the tears of an old man affecting beyond expreſſion. The diſtreſs of a young man, however deep, has a thouſand alleviating circumſtances; youth, ſtrength, health, enable him to bear up under misfortunes, and with the aſſiſtance of a good conſcience render him ſuperior to adverſity, and give him moreover a moral hope of ſeeing better days: but how very widely different is the caſe with a man whoſe misfortunes come upon him at a time when even the comforts of life loſe half their reliſh; his faculties weakened, his friends gone or eſtranged, his hopes overclouded, his reflections imbittered by the ſad retroſpect of pleaſures paſt, of joys forfeited by the baſeneſs of others, or his own imprudence, and his views for after-enjoyments cut ſhort,

by the natural period of all earthly good; then, when ill-timed misfortunes bear hard upon him and force the tears from thoſe eyes which he had hoped to cloſe in peace, when the ideas of helpleſs age and poignant grief enter the mind together, what heart can ſtand the attack! No, there is not in nature a ſight ſo affecting as the tears of an old man.—"The "prayers of good people," ſaid Sir Charles, after a moment's recollection, "are ever "valuable; you have obliged me, Sir, "more than I can have obliged you." "Impoſſible," cried Mr. Barker.

It is difficult to ſay where this conteſt would have ended, if a ſervant had not opened the door and announced dinner.

The company brightened up, and the old gentleman recovering his chearfulneſs, threw an air of pleaſantry into the converſation, which mixing with their inward ſenſations, made their happineſs to be envied. Mrs. Barker ſhewed ſo much good ſenſe, politeneſs, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, that Sir Charles could not help drawing a compariſon which made him feel the greateſt degree of ſatisfaction from her converſation: there was ſomething too

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in the air of her perſon which juſtified the idea, and gave him ſuch a prepoſſeſſion in her favour as made him happy in the proſpect of a friendſhip which on his part was formed the inſtant they met, and on hers long before.

CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles viſits Mrs. Stapleton, and walks a-ſhopping with her.

WHEN Sir Charles came home he found a card from Mrs. Stapleton, informing him that ſhe was arrived in town, and ſhould be glad to ſee him in Bond-Street whenever he pleaſed. He wanted not any farther information to a place where he was at leaſt ſure of hearing of Miſs Clayton, if not from her: he therefore went as ſoon as he had breakfaſted the next morning, and found her reading a letter which Miſs Clayton had left for her at her lodgings, before ſhe went out of town. "This letter," ſaid ſhe, "Sir Charles, gives "me an account of an adventure fortunate "beyond expectation; an interview ſo un-"hoped for was worth half a dozen preme-"ditated ones. But poor Harriet has ſuffered "for it, for both Sir Harry and Lady Clay-"ton inſiſt upon it that you came ſo ſpeedily "to town in conſequence of an aſſignation "with her. Sir Iſaac too pretended to give "himſelf airs about it, it ſeems, and talked

"in

" in a very high ſtile, and that Miſs Clayton " uſed him ill in giving you encouragement " before his face; and he would have her con- " ſider that ſuch offers as his were not to be met " with every day; that there were few families " who would not be proud of the honour of " his alliance. There by great good luck he " went a ſtep too far; for Sir Harry took " him up and ſaid many flouriſhing things " about his family, which Sir Iſaac, did not " thoroughly reliſh; and, in ſhort, they " parted for the evening in ſuch very mode- " rate temper with each other, that I am in " great hopes, with a little of my aſſiſtance, " Sir Harry will be ſo diſguſted with the ar- " rogance of this upſtart knight, that he will " have no great inclination for being plagued " with it all the reſt of his life."

Sir Charles was delighted with this account, and conceived great hope of matters turning out better than they had ſeemed to promiſe. " And when, Madam," ſaid he, " do you " propoſe joining the party?" " My dear Sir " Charles," replied ſhe, " have a moment's " patience: I am but this inſtant arrived in " town, do not be in ſuch a hurry to get rid " of me again. How is it, that with even " the politeſt of you men, a paſſion for one " woman ſwallows up all your conſideration

"for the reſt of the ſex? I thought you would "have been ſo rejoiced to ſee me, nothing "could be like it, and the very firſt word "you ſay is, When do you go?"

Sir Charles made the beſt apology he was able, and by way of recompence begged to have the honour of being her eſcorte and aſſiſtant in any buſineſs ſhe might have to do whilſt ſhe ſtaid in town.

"I take you at your word," ſaid ſhe. "I "have forty things to buy in Taviſtock-"Street, and it is ſo fine a morning, I have an "inclination to walk; will you give me your "company?" "Moſt willingly," replied Sir Charles; and ſo they ſallied out together. They called at forty places, and bought and beſpoke forty things. "Here is a ſhop," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, "in this neighbourhood, "to which I was recommended by my milli-"ner at Bath; it is kept by a young woman, "a friend of hers lately ſet up in buſineſs, "and I ſhall now call and beſpeak ſome "things out of civility to Mrs. Cook." The perſon who kept the ſhop ſeemed to be about five-and-thirty: her face had the remains of beauty, and her air had a certain eaſe, which contraſted with a little aukwardneſs in her manner of executing her buſineſs, gave Sir Charles an idea that ſhe had not been brought

up

up in the way ſhe was now in. Mrs. Stapleton beſpoke ſome millinery articles, and wanting to give her a direction where to ſend them, aſked for a pen and ink and a piece of paper. The pen and ink were ready, but no paper being at hand, Sir Charles pulled his letters out of his pocket, and gave her the covers. As ſhe was writing her addreſs on one, the other lay upon the counter, and Sir Charles thought he obſerved the perſon of the ſhop look at it with ſome attention: juſt caſting his eyes upon one of the letters as he put them into his pocket again, "My friend," ſaid he, "would think himſelf very happy if he knew "what uſe I have made of his covers. You "don't know my friend Norris, Mrs. Sta-"pleton; I promiſe myſelf great ſatisfaction "in preſenting him to the honour of your "acquaintance."

Mrs. Stapleton had finiſhed her direction, and looking up, was ſurprized to ſee the perſon of the ſhop pale and trembling. "Are "you ill, Madam?" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton.

She apologiſed for her confuſion; ſaid ſhe was very ſubject to giddineſſes in her head, bluſhed, ſmelled at her ſalts, ſaid it was nothing more than uſual, curtſied, begged pardon, ſaid ſhe would be ſure to ſend the things,

hoped if her ladyſhip wanted any thing elſe, ſhe would be ſo good as to permit her to call her partner, as ſhe found herſelf very ill.

Mrs. Stapleton ſaid no, ſhe had done, wiſhed her better, and left the ſhop.

Sir Charles thought there was ſomething particular in her behaviour, and when they were got into the ſtreet, aſked Mrs. Stapleton who ſhe was. "I know no more of her," ſaid ſhe, "than that her name is Bond; that "ſhe was a little while in Mrs. Cook's ſhop "at Bath, and has lately taken this ſhop in "partnerſhip with another perſon."

Sir Charles knew nobody of that name, ſo concluded he was miſtaken, and thought no more of the affair. When they arrived at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings, Sir Charles ſaid he would not break in upon the buſineſs of her toilet; but aſked if he might have the honour to attend her in the evening at home, or any where elſe. "Why no," ſaid ſhe; "to-night I give "to a tête-à-tête party with a friend whom I "have not ſeen for a long time: but to-morrow "morning, if you are inclined for another "walk, I ſhall be glad to ſee you at breakfaſt; "and remember, I beſpeak you for the even-"ing, to eſcorte my friend and me to the "opera. I am willing to make the moſt of

"my

" my time, for now you are very civil, and " don't drive me out of town, I will tell you " that I intend going into Suffolk the day af- " ter to-morrow." Sir Charles promiſed to attend her, and having aſſured her, which was indeed true, that nothing but the abſolute neceſſity Miſs Clayton had for her aſſiſtance, could keep him from feeling the greateſt regret at her going out of town, he took his leave.

CHAP. VII.

Sir Charles forms a Scheme. Remarks on it Entertains the Barkers at Dinner. Converſation Piece. Diſſertation on Muſic.

WHEN Sir Charles came home, he found a letter from Norris, which, as ſoon as he had dreſſed himſelf, he ſat down to anſwer: but as the Barkers were to dine with him, he did not ſeal up his letter till they came, that Mr. J. Barker might, if he pleaſed, add a poſtſcript.

I ſhall not, reader, trouble you with this letter, as it contained little more than an account of what you have ſeen paſſing in the laſt four or five chapters: only he tells Mr. Norris that he is determined to come down to the hall in a few days; and the poſtſcript informs him that all the Barker family have promiſed to be of the party; but upon condition that he will return with them to town.

This letter was alſo filled with encomiums on Mrs. Stapleton, with whom Sir Charles was

was ſo much taken, that, like Bartholomew Cokes, he was almoſt ready to cry, "Would "I might marry her too!" but as that was impoſſible, he had formed a ſcheme in his head, which he longed very much to accompliſh: in ſhort, he had fallen in love with her as proxy for his friend; and as his converſation to Mrs. Stapleton ran very much upon the virtues of Mr. Norris, ſo his letters to him were as full of the praiſes of Mrs. Stapleton; by which means he hoped, by the time they met, they would be ſo far from ſtrangers to each other, that the buſineſs would be half done.

His ſcheme was not an improbable one; for whatever we may imagine, likes and diſlikes depend more upon prejudice than many people are aware of; and perhaps we cannot often give a better reaſon for being fond of any one, than becauſe he or ſhe is a great favourite with a perſon of whoſe judgment we have a high opinion, and for whom we have a very great value.

Now, as both theſe parties had the higheſt eſteem for, and opinion of Sir Charles, it was not improbable that his word would go as far, nay, perhaps farther, with both of them, than even their own judgments.

Your romantic young ladies and gentlemen, who are all for love at firſt ſight, and who rave about *penchant* and ſympathy, and all that, will probably be ſhocked at the thought of taking a lover or a miſtreſs upon recommendation: but with people who have not more ſentiment than ſenſe, I am not ſure whether it is not the wiſeſt way. "The heart," ſays one who was reckoned a ſenſible man in his time, "is deceitful above all things, who can "know it?" And in nothing is it more ſo than in the affair of falling in love as it is called. In general, a look, a ſmile, an eye, a mouth, nay even a ſuit of cloaths, gives the heart ſuch a twiſt in favour of a perſon, as determines its bent in ſpite of all that reaſon can do to ſet it right again: ſo that it is highly probable the affair is irrecoverably concluded, before experience can have time to inform the judgment how deceitful the heart has been.

Now if we were to take a recommendation of a lover or a miſtreſs from thoſe who have the uſe of their eyes and judgment at liberty, and in ſhort take none without a character from their laſt ſervice, we might not lie quite ſo much at the mercy of the heart as we now do. Sometimes indeed, as in the caſe of ſervants, we might find a difficulty in

in getting a true character; friendſhip may ſay too much, and enmity too little; but when the heart is unprejudiced, one ſtanding rule obſerved, which is always to take a character from one of the oppoſite ſex, and a few grains of allowance for accidental connections, will bring the matter pretty near to a certainty.—"What then are we to hire lovers at a ſta-"tute? Are all the ſublime tranſports of an "enraptured heart to be reſtrained by the "cold, unfeeling judgment? Shall love, al-"mighty love, keep a Regiſter-office?" I beg pardon, Miſs, I thought not of love, I was talking of marriage.

After dinner the converſation happened to turn upon muſic. Sir Charles and young Barker canvaſſed the merits of different compoſers and performers with freedom and candor; and Sir Charles was not a little pleaſed to find that his new acquired friend had a delicacy of taſte, and an accuracy of judgment, which do not fall to the ſhare of many muſical people. Old Mr. Barker was ſilent, but attentive. "I dare ſay," ſaid Sir Charles, "that you think your ſon and me a couple of "coxcombs in your heart, for making ſuch a "piece of work with theſe matters."

"Pardon me," replied he, "the enthu-"ſiaſm which you both ſeem to feel when

"you

" you ſpeak of *Leo* and *Pergoleſi*, and other " authors, is, I own, above my comprehen- " ſion, becauſe, from a want of diſtinction in " my ear, the beauties which occaſion it are " ſo: but I cannot help thinking that you " have as great an advantage over me, as I " have, when I am in raptures with a paſſage " in Virgil, or Horace, over a man who can- " not read Latin. Indeed, what uſe do we " hope to derive from any ſpeculative know- " ledge, and what is our reaſon for wiſhing " to acquire an inſight into any ſcience; but " by that means to encreaſe our proſpect of " happineſs, by opening freſh ſources of de- " light? Surely then, I muſt rather think " myſelf labouring under a misfortune, who " am denied, by a natural defect, having any " knowledge of that ſource from whence you " derive ſuch exquiſite ſatisfaction." " There " are few unmuſical people," ſaid Mrs. Bar- " ker, who judge ſo candidly of this matter. I " acknowledge that I have frequently been " afraid of expreſſing my ſatisfaction as I " would have wiſhed, for fear of being taxed " with affectation."

" It is impoſſible," replied old Mr. Barker, " for people always to diſtinguiſh between a " real taſte for a thing, and the affectation of " it: and, in an age ſo full of pretended

" con-

" connoiſſeurs as this is, I am not ſurprized " that people generally ſuſpect affectation. I " myſelf am very apt to do it; and I dare ſay " often wrong many an intelligent perſon. " Sir Charles, I thank him, when we met at " the opera helped me to a clue to find out a " *faux connoiſſeur* by; they always make moſt " noiſe with their ſenſations, and take the " moſt pains to make you think that they " feel." " Indeed, Mr. Barker," ſaid Sir Charles, " that rule will often lead you into " an error; for I know many people who " really feel, and can no more help ex- " preſſing themſelves in a rapturous kind of " way to thoſe who are near them, than they " can help crying out if they are in pain." " That," ſaid young Barker, " intirely depends " upon the temper and conſtitution: ſome " people will ſuffer the moſt exquiſite pain " without uttering a word or a ſigh; ſome " will cry out and groan for the head-ach: " it is juſt the ſame with regard to pleaſure; " ſome will never let you know whether they " are pleaſed or not, whilſt others double " their pleaſure by expreſſing it."

" Why here then," cried the old gentleman, " I am all abroad again. I ſuppoſe " now you or Sir Charles would know a real " connoiſſeur from a pretended one at firſt

" ſight;

" ſight; why cannot I?" " Becauſe," replied Sir Charles, " you are not a brother. " We are like Free-maſons, and have our " ſigns to know one another by, which the " reſt of the world cannot find out. You " never can find out what is wrong, unleſs " you know what is right: a man muſt not " only expreſs his ſatisfaction by his words " or geſtures, he muſt expreſs it in a right " manner and a right place, to convince us " that he feels. It is the ſame thing in any " other ſcience; a man can never paſs for an " adept by getting the terms by heart, unleſs " he knows how to apply them." " Well," ſaid old Mr. Barker, " I acknowledge I envy " people who have an ear, and a capability of " enjoying muſic. My daughter there ſays " I am candid; and, with regard to this matter, I believe I am. I think it very hard, " though no muſical man myſelf, that muſic " ſhould be grudged its place amongſt the " ſciences: and yet I find it is the faſhion " with many overwiſe men to treat it with " the contempt which it never has been uſed " to meet with, and certainly cannot deſerve, " in any age or country. It has been called, " rather degradingly, the handmaid to the " arts; but theſe people treat her worſe than " the verieſt kitchen wench. When I was

" laſt

" laſt at Cambridge, I found ſome people of " my own ſtanding, who, from a long courſe " of metaphyſics and algebra, had contracted " a certain hardneſs of heart, which makes " it impenetrable to any finer ſenſations, who " had perſuaded themſelves, and endeavour " to perſuade others, that a knowledge of " muſic was at leaſt deſpicable, and a fond- " neſs for it little ſhort of criminal. If you " mentioned any young man of lively parts, " who was not inſenſible to harmony, they " ſhook their heads, or turned up their noſes, " and ſaid he is a very good fidler! As if a " man's excelling in one thing, was a hin- " drance to him in every other acquirement. " They reminded me of a remark of La " Bruiere, I think his words are ſomething " like theſe, *Les vuës courtes, je veux dire les* " *eſprits bornez et reſſerrez dans leur petite ſphere* " *ne peuvent comprendre cetti univerſalité de ta-* " *lens que l'on remarque quelquefois dans un meme* " *ſujet; ou ils voyent l'agreable, ils en excluent* " *le ſolide: ils otent de l'hiſtoire de Socrate qu'il* " *ait danſé.* I acknowledge I was hurt to hear " any thing ſo illiberal in one of the ſeats of " the muſes, and could not help taking them " to taſk after my way. I aſked them where " they got theſe unworthy notions of muſic? " I was ſure their dear friends, the great an-

" cients,

" cients, taught them none such; that if they
" would come a little lower, and consult *Mei-*
" *bomius*, they would find some very respectable
" names, with their friend *Euclid*, at the head
" of them, who have left elaborate treatises
" upon the sciences; and as to the moderns,
" if they would give themselves the trouble
" to look into the world, farther I mean than
" *Hogmagog Hills* or *Trumpington*, they would
" find that the greatest and wisest men of our
" own times had not disdained to take music
" into the circle of science. Nay, if they
" looked even amongst themselves, they would
" find the greatest ornaments of their own
" body were at the same time their greatest
" musicians. I grew at last quite warm: I was
" just come from Trinity College, whose great
" court still resounded with the lamentations
" of the society, for the loss of my valuable
" old friend there, who, though he never
" could make a musician of me, had in-
" structed me early in the theory of harmony,
" and convinced me long since by his own
" example that an enthusiastic fondness for
" music, was far from being incompatible
" with every valuable acquirement of the
" head, and was a promoter of every amiable
" affection of the heart. Had'st thou been
" here, ever valuable friend," cried I,

addres-

addreſſing myſelf to his idea, thou would'ſt "have taught theſe torpid men, with half "thy greatneſs of mind, and a tythe of thy "liberality and goodneſs of heart, that the "human ſoul is not to be confined within a "circle, and portioned out by ſegments, but "will open and expand itſelf in a ratio that they "know not of! Mundungus was aſtoniſhed, "Fogramo ſaid I was mad, Ventoſus would "have run for a ſurgeon: but not one of "them has a better opinion of muſic yet, for "all I could ſay."—The company was much diverted with the old gentleman's warmth, which ſeemed the more generous, as it was in favour of a ſcience to which he profeſſed himſelf a ſtranger. Not that he was void of all diſtinction in it, for he loved ſuch muſic as was within his comprehenſion, and had a peculiar pleaſure in hearing his daughter ſing. When they retired into the drawing-room to coffee, Sir Charles led Mrs. Barker to the harpſichord, and begged that ſhe would tell him if it was in tune, for that he had hardly touched it ſince he came to town. She made no difficulty of ſitting down to it, and ran over the keys in ſuch a manner as ſhewed ſhe had no occaſion. "Come," ſaid old Mr. Barker, "play ſomething without telling any "lies about being out of practice, and all "that."

" that." " My dear Sir," ſaid ſhe, " I ne-
" ver make any difficulty of playing to people
" who know how to make allowances; it is
" your half muſicians that I am afraid of."
She played a leſſon of *Scarlatti* with great execution. Sir Charles commended her finger. She tried another, but puzzled herſelf in one or two paſſages, and Sir Charles leaning over her chair, juſt ſhewed her an eaſier way of fingering them. " I knew," ſaid ſhe, " I
" ſhould rather get than loſe by playing to
" Sir Charles." After coffee, Sir Charles ordered two fiddles, and he and young Barker accompanied her to ſome ſongs. She ſung in a quiet, pathetic kind of ſtile, which often gives a real lover of muſic more pleaſure than all the theatrical execution that can be exerted. They ſtaid ſupper with Sir Charles, and parted more and more delighted with one another.

CHAP

CHAP. VIII.

Sir Charles receives a Preſent, and writes a Letter of Thanks.

SIR Charles went to Mrs. Stapleton's the next morning, according to his appointment. His watch was too faſt, or her's too ſlow, ſhe was not ſtirring. He ſeated himſelf by the dining room fire, and was amuſing himſelf with the news-paper which lay upon the table, when her maid entered with a little ſhagreen caſe. "My lady, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "begs your pardon for making you wait for "your breakfaſt, but has ſent you this to ſtay "your ſtomach." He took it, and opened it; he would have been contented to have ſtaid noon or night for his breakfaſt; 'twas Miſs Clayton's picture: and though he had a far better picture of her in his heart, as he had her there at full length, body and mind together, yet he looked at it with the higheſt delight. "'Tis very like her," ſaid he. The painter had not done her juſtice neither; he had given her a ſmile, but it was a ſtarched prim ſmile; 'twas not a ſmile of intelligence.

"Fool!"

"Fool!" ſaid he, "her ſmiles always mean "kindneſs, or complacency, or condeſcen-"ſion, or civility, or ſomething amiable; "this is a ſmile which nobody can tranſlate. "'Tis not ſo like as I thought it was. Then "her eyes are dead; no life, no luſtre; the "colour in her cheeks is too ſettled, too like "art, there is not that bloom, that——it is "not like her at all. Though, after all, I be-"lieve it is as much as art can do. No pic-"ture can be very like her, unleſs it could "ſpeak and think. But ſtill thou art her "image, though a poor lifeleſs one: where "is that animated fire in your eyes?"—— "I profeſs I don't know," ſaid Mrs. Staple-ton, entering at that inſtant; "ſlept out I "believe, for it is a ſhameful time of day." "Here," ſaid Sir Charles, "take back the "idol you ſent me, I have paid my devotions "to it, and though I have a far better like-"neſs of my own, I was growing into hu-"mour with it ſo faſt, that, had you ſtaid "a few minutes longer, you had never ſeen "it more." "Why, don't you think it "like her?" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton. "*Coſi,* "*coſi,*" replied Sir Charles; "I believe it "may be as like her as it is in the power of "paint to make one; but the beauty of Miſs "Clayton's face is, that you ſee through it

" into her heart." " O very well," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, taking the picture," " I'll " ſend it back, and tell her you don't like it; " there's no harm done." " Why, you did " not mean to give it me!" cried he. " Not " I," replied ſhe. " Harriet ſat for it before " ſhe left Bath; ſhe was forced to go away " before it was quite finiſhed, ſo deſired me " to receive it, and give it to you in her name; " but as that was when ſhe was in a great " fright leſt ſhe ſhould never ſee you again, " may be ſhe has changed her mind by this " time, and will be glad to have her picture " again." " Cruel Mrs. Stapleton," cried Sir Charles, " how you love to perplex! As " *your* picture I found fault with it, for want- " ing that nameleſs ſomething which paint " cannot expreſs; but the conſidering it as " *mine*, and given nobly, frankly, unſolicited, " unhoped for, will abundantly ſupply that " defect. Let me receive it as I ought," cried he, kneeling down and putting the picture to his lips, " and if you have the leaſt regard " for me, ſay not a word of what has paſſed." The maid that inſtant coming in with the tea-kettle, Sir Charles ſprang up, with a little aukward confuſion, and Mrs. Jenny going down into the kitchen, told every body that her lady was going to be married, for that the handſome

handſome gentleman was upon his knees to her, and ſhe was ſure ſhe could not refuſe him any thing he aſked. "You talked to me "yeſterday of a friend of yours," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, "to-night I ſhall have the plea- "ſure of introducing you to a friend of mine, "Lady Mary *Warren*; do you know her?" "I do not," ſaid Sir Charles; "but if ſhe "was Lady Mary Beville, as I think ſhe was, "I have the honour of being related to her." "How nearly?" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton. "Why," replied he, "ours is another "branch of the ſame family, and we are ſo "nearly related, that if her two brothers, "the preſent Lord Beville and a younger "one, ſhould die without children, I ſhould "ſucceed to the eſtate and title." "That is "not very likely," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, "as "my lord is lately married, and Mr. George "Beville is a young man at the Univerſity. "But I am glad I know this; I think it may "be of ſome uſe with regard to Sir Harry "Clayton: I wonder you never told him of "this connection." "Why, really," ſaid Sir Charles, "it is an aſpect from which it "is ſo unlikely that I ſhould ever reap "any advantage, that I ſhould have been "aſhamed to have laid any ſtreſs upon it." "You are much too generous to live in this

"cunning

" cunning world," replied ſhe, " and there-
" fore I don't think you will be of much
" uſe to me this morning, for I am going to
" buy a gown, and I know I ſhall be aſhamed
" to beat Mr. Silvertongue down before you,
" as I ſhould do if I was by myſelf, and ſo
" I expect to loſe ſome few ſhillings by you."
" Not this morning I fear," replied he, " for
" I think the rain will prevent our walk."
" Rains!"——cried ſhe, " why ſo it does;
" and now as I have ſo much to do, and ſo
" little time to do it in, I think I would bor-
" row your coach, and whilſt it is ſending
" for, if I knew what to do with you, I
" would have an hour's conference with a
" very important gentleman at the next door,
" my hair-dreſſer." " Shut me up here,"
ſaid Sir Charles, " with pen, ink and paper,
" and let me thank my Harriet for her picture."
" Agreed," ſaid ſhe; and ſo Sir Charles hav-
ing diſpatched her ſervant for the coach, ſat
down and wrote the following letter:

IT is impoſſible, my deareſt Madam, for any one who is not in love to conceive the pleaſure Mrs. Stapleton has juſt given me: be not alarmed; it is impoſſible for any lady to give me pleaſure, but by your means. Till this inſtant I thought myſelf a tolerable good

proteſtant Chriſtian; but never was ſuch an idolator as I am become. Never did the verieſt heathen pay ſuch adoration to the image of his Venus, nor the moſt zealous papiſt to that of his Virgin, as I do to mine; but like them, I excuſe my idolatry by ſaying, that I only adore the image, as it leads me to the conſideration of ſomething better: whether that excuſe will bring them off or not, I cannot tell; but I am ſure it will me. But, call me ungrateful if you will, I am not ſatisfied. For the firſt ten minutes after I received your image I was in raptures, and commended the painter to the ſkies. The next ten, when I had peruſed it about two thouſand times, I began to ſigh, and feel a miſs of ſomething that paint cannot expreſs; in ſhort, I began to find, that, unleſs a picture could be made to ſpeak and think, it can convey but a very poor idea of you at beſt: and now that I have been in poſſeſſion of it a full half hour, and have examined it about a million of times, I feel that the faint ideas it gives me of you ſerve only to put me in mind, that whilſt I am gazing at the copy, the original is far, far from my ſight. And is this the return you will ſay for having ſo generouſly given you what you had not the aſſurance to aſk for, and for having ſhewn you that I not only thought of you

when

when you was abſent, but wiſhed you to think of me? No, my charming Harriet, it is not the return I make to all theſe unmerited favours; I have every grateful ſenſe of them that it is poſſible for man to have; but I only now am telling you the real ſentiments of my heart, merely to ſhew you how honeſt a heart it is, which can confeſs even its own weakneſs and unreaſonableneſs to you. In ſhort, it does not ſignify to diſguiſe the truth, give me any thing but yourſelf, and I ſhall ſtill be diſſatisfied.—I am now writing at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings. The vain thing is now under the hands of her *friſſeur*, who is twiſting and twirling her hair into five thouſand ſtrange ſhapes, in order for her to make conqueſts at the opera to-night. She is forced to take up with me by way of *eſcorte*, though ſhe ſays you have abſolutely ſpoilt me for a ſlave; that I have not a civil thing left for any other woman; and that at the very inſtant that I am ſo happy as to enjoy a tête-à-tête with her, I am, in my heart, wiſhing her in Suffolk; and there I am almoſt afraid ſhe ſays but too true; for I fear my cauſe will go on but poorly till my counſel arrives. She thinks ſhe has found out a plea in my favour, which may have weight with the court; for my part, I think it is a diſhoneſt reckoning; but if a man was

to bar his counſel all the chicane of the law, he might as well give up his cauſe at once; ſo let her make the beſt of it. I have ſome thoughts of paſſing a few weeks at the hall, by way of having ſome buſineſs to fill up that time which will hang ſo heavily on my hands. The Barkers have promiſed me their company, and Norris returns with us to town, as ſoon as the holidays are over. Surely, ſurely, by that time, the cauſe may be decided in my favour, or at leaſt be in ſuch a train that I need no longer play at bo-peep, like a rat behind a wainſcot; but may ſtep out boldly, and acknowledge to all the world, how high an honour I eſteem it to have the liberty of ſubſcribing myſelf,

Your moſt devoted humble ſervant,

C. BEVILLE.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Converſation-pieces upon Head-dreſſes, Propriety, and various other Matters.

SIR Charles had juſt finiſhed his letter when Mrs. Stapleton entered the room, with a head very different from that with which ſhe left it. "Pray, Madam," ſaid Sir Charles, "may I beg the favour of the "name of your head?" "This, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "is *un tete de mouton.*" "Pardon me, replied he, "the air it gives you has ſo little of "the ſheepiſh in it, that I ſhould never have "imagined it." "Now, my dear Sir Charles," cried ſhe, "you are going to run on with a "ſtring of common-place obſervations about "nature and beauty, and all that; now you "muſt know there is nothing I hate ſo much "as an argument which I cannot contradict, "and therefore if you pleaſe I will allow you, "that all you can ſay againſt this prepoſterous "faſhion, is very ſenſible and very natural; "but then you muſt allow me, that I have a "right to be fooliſh and unnatural if I like "it." "But a woman of your ſenſe,"—ſaid Sir Charles. "That's very true," replied

ſhe, "but I never yet met with a woman "who had ſenſe enough to go directly contrary to the faſhion. Beſides, what a vain "wretch muſt I be to think the whole town "fools but myſelf! I aſſure you, Sir Charles, "I think it is a great preſumption in little "folks to pretend to have faſhions of their "own. If I was a dutcheſs, I might conſult "reaſon, and ſenſe, and inclination, and ſhould "have my due praiſe for it; but as I am "poor Emily Stapleton, if I conſult any "thing but the faſhion, I ſhall only be called "an affected fool, and laughed at for pretending to think for myſelf, when my betters are contented to let their milliners and "mantua-makers think for them." "It is "very true," replied Sir Charles, "I had "forgot that I ſettled it with myſelf the other "night, that no one had a right to have "more ſenſe and reaſon than the world chooſe "to allow them."—The coach being by this time arrived, they both ſtepped into it; and having diſpatched a multitude of buſineſs, Sir Charles brought Mrs. Stapleton home again, and took his leave, promiſing to attend her in the evening.

He came about ſix o'clock, and Mrs. Stapleton introduced him to his couſin Lady Mary Warren. She was a widow of about forty; agreeable

agreeable in her perſon, but had a gravity in her air which Sir Charles miſtook for melancholy; he ſoon found it was only a tincture of prudery in her character, which threw a little reſerve into her behaviour to ſtrangers, which however wore off by degrees, till it quite diſappeared. "Sir Charles," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, "I have been telling Lady Mary "that you and I had ſettled it this morning, "that it was impoſſible to ſet the world at "defiance; and ſhe will have it, that I have "been doing that very thing, in going "about with you a whole day in your coach, "without ſome *chaperon* or other, to ſave "appearances. I tell her, if I was a young "girl indeed, it might not be ſo prudent; but "an old widow"——"A young widow, "you mean," ſaid Lady Mary—"But, my "dear Stapleton, did not you promiſe me that "you would not call Sir Charles in to your aſ-"ſiſtance in this argument?" "You ſup-"poſe then," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, "that "he muſt neceſſarily be on my ſide of the "queſtion?" "Or I dare ſay," replied Sir Charles, "her ladyſhip would think I little "deſerved the honour you did me: but even "ſetting that aſide, I am afraid, Madam, I "muſt have been againſt your ladyſhip in this "argument. I cannot think the world is

" come to ſuch a paſs that a man and woman " cannot go in the ſame carriage without an " imputation of ſome criminal connection." " The world, Sir Charles," ſaid Lady Mary, " is very cenſorious." " It is, Madam," replied Sir Charles; " but I have obſerved that " even the moſt cenſorious people chooſe to have " probability on their ſide; and that a lady's " character cannot have been free from blemiſh, which a ſlight random imputation, " unſupported by any concurrent circumſtances, can affect. It requires, Madam, " a very great degree of aſſurance to make an " attack upon an unblemiſhed character." " But, Sir Charles," ſaid Lady Mary, " is " it a rare thing to meet with people who " have that degree, or every degree of aſſurance?" " And how, Madam," ſaid Sir Charles, " will your ladyſhip permit me to " aſk, are the inſinuations of ſuch people to " be guarded againſt? Does your ladyſhip " imagine that going three in a coach will do " it? People cannot live by threes; and if " they could, I am afraid it would be no difficult matter to find third perſons who " might be of very little reſtraint." " Do you " think then, Sir Charles," ſaid Lady Mary, " that appearances are quite to be neglected?" " Why, Madam," replied he, " I hate all ge-

" neral

" neral rules: but with regard to criminal " appearances, I cannot help thinking, that " if people would ſeriouſly make a point of " living to their own hearts and conſciences, " and of never doing any thing to reproach " themſelves for, they would very ſeldom " meet with the reproach of the world." I " hope," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, " that you will " both allow that I have held my tongue a " long time; and now I will venture to aſk a " queſtion; Do we intend to go to the opera " to-night? becauſe if we do, it is high time " to go."—" You are very impertinent," ſaid Lady Mary, " for in five minutes more Sir " Charles would have convinced me that " every body may do any thing that has no " harm in it." " Well then," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, " as a proof that you are well-nigh " brought over, and as there are three of us, " I hope you will give his coach leave to carry " us, and ſend your chairmen home, or elſe " I ſhall certainly be tempted to go with him " by myſelf." Lady Mary ſaid ſhe had no objection; and ſo they went off ſociably together. The converſation was renewed in the coach. " For my part," ſaid Sir Charles, " I aſk pardon, ladies; but I am very much " of opinion that young ladies are in more " danger from great intimacies with their own

" ſex, than from any general intercourſe with " ours." So !" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton. " I am really " of Sir Charles's opinion," " ſaid Lady Mary, " for I am ſure I know ladies who, amongſt " themſelves, entertain each other with ſuch " converſations, as none of them would " bear from the other ſex, and I believe but " few men would dare to enter into with any " ladies who kept up the appearance of mo- " deſty." " Upon my word," cried Mrs. Stapleton, " you have done finely by your " own neſt." " I know, Stapleton," ſaid Lady Mary, " you think me an intolerable " prude; but I am convinced that there is " not a more dangerous kind of acquaintance, " for young women, than that of ſome mar- " ried ladies, who have, in their intercourſe " with the world, more diſcretion than vir- " tue. I could point out to you many ſuch, " who from intimacies with young women, " in the courſe of which they lay aſide that " diſcretion, which as it is not founded in " virtue, is only put on when they think " there is a neceſſity for it, and by raiſing " their curioſity, and inflaming their paſſions, " leave them an eaſy prey to the next attack." By this time the coach ſtopped at the opera-houſe door, and it was very well it did, or Lady Mary's zeal againſt the indiſcreet part

of her own ſex, might have hurried her into ſome conceſſions, which would not have been ſo much to their credit.

Nothing very material paſſed at the opera, except an obſervation of Mrs. Stapleton's, "that a muſical man is the worſt companion "in the world at a muſical entertainment." Sir Charles ſet the ladies down at Mrs. Stapleton's lodgings, and having begged her to let him hear from her as ſoon as ſhe arrived in Suffolk, took his leave, and went home, determined to ſet out the next morning for the hall, whither the Barkers were to accompany him.

END *of the* FOURTH BOOK.

BOOK

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

CASTLE-BUILDING;

An ELEGY.

——*Sweet pliability of man's ſpirit, that can at once ſurrender itſelf to illuſions which cheat expectation and ſorrow of their weary moments.*

STERNE's Sentimental Journey.

GODDESS of golden dreams, whoſe magic pow'r
Sheds ſmiles of joy o'er Mis'ry's haggard face,

And

And laviſh ſtrews the viſionary flow'r,
To deck life's dreary paths with tranſient grace.

I wooe thee, Fancy, from thy fairy cell,
Where 'midſt the endleſs woes of human kind,
Wrapt in ideal bliſs, thou lov'ſt to dwell,
And ſport in happier regions unconfin'd.

Deep ſunk, O Goddeſs! in thy pleaſing trance,
Oft let me ſeek yon low ſequeſter'd vale,
Whilſt Wiſdom's ſelf ſhall ſteal a ſidelong glance,
And ſmile contempt—but liſten to thy tale.

Alas! how little do her vot'ries gueſs
Thoſe rigid truths, which learned fools revere,
Serve but to prove, O bane to happineſs!
Our joys deluſive, but our woes ſincere.

Be theirs to ſearch where cluſtering roſes grow,
Touching each ſharp thorn's point, to prove how keen;
Be mine to trace their beauties as they blow,
And catch their fragrance where they bluſh unſeen.

Haply

Haply my path may lie thro' barren vales,
Where niggard Fortune all her ſweets denies;
Ev'n there ſhall Fancy ſcent the ambient gales,
And ſcatter flow'rets of a thouſand dyes.

Nor let the worldling ſcoff: be his the taſk
To form deep ſchemes—and mourn his hopes betray'd;
Be mine to range unſeen, 'tis all I aſk,
And frame new worlds beneath the ſilent ſhade.

To look beyond the views of wealth and pride,
Bidding the mind's eye range without controul,
Through wild, extatic day-dreams, far and wide,
To bring returns of comfort to the ſoul.

To bid groves, hills, and lucid ſtreams appear,
The gilded ſpire, arch'd dome, and fretted vault;
And ſweet ſociety be ever near
Love, ever young, and friends without a fault.

I ſee

I ſee entranc'd the gay conceptions riſe,
My harveſts ripen, and my white flocks thrive;
And ſtill as Fancy pours her large ſupplies,
I taſte the god-like happineſs to give.

To check the patient widow's deep-fetch'd ſighs,
And ſhield her infant from the north-blaſt rude;
To bid the ſweetly-gliſtening tear ariſe,
Which ſwims in the glad eye of gratitude.

To join the artleſs maid and honeſt ſwain,
Where fortune rudely bars the way to joy;
To eaſe the tender mother's anxious pain,
And guard, with foſt'ring hand, her darling boy.

To raiſe up modeſt merit from the ground,
And ſend th' unhappy ſmiling from my door;
To ſpread content and chearfulneſs around,
And banquet on the bleſſings of the poor.

Delicious dream! how oft beneath thy pow'r,
Thus light'ning the ſad load of other's woe,
I ſteal from rigid fate one happy hour,
Nor feel I want the pity I beſtow.

Delicious dream! how often doſt thou give
A gleam of bliſs, which Truth would but deſtroy;
Oft doſt thou bid my drooping heart revive,
And catch one chearful glimpſe of tranſient joy.

And O how precious is that timely friend,
Who checks affliction in her dread career!
Who knows diſtreſs, well knows that he may lend
One hour of life, who ſtops one riſing tear.

O, but for thee, long ſince the hand of Care
Had mark'd with livid pale my furrow'd cheek;
Long ſince the ſhiv'ring graſp of cold Deſpair
Had chill'd my heart, and taught it how to break.

For ah! Affliction ſteals with trackleſs flight;
Silent the ſtroke ſhe gives, but not leſs keen:
And bleak Misfortune, like an eaſtern blight,
Sheds black deſtruction, though it flies unſeen.

O come

O come then Fancy, and with lenient hand
Dry my moiſt cheek and ſmooth my furrow'd brow;
Bear me o'er ſmiling tracks of Fairy-land,
And give me more than Fortune can beſtow.

Mix'd are her boons, and chequer'd all with ill,
Her ſmiles, the ſun-ſhine of an April morn,
The cheerleſs valley ſkirts the gilded hill,
And latent ſtorms in every gale are borne.

Give me thy hope, which ſickens not the heart;
Give me thy wealth, which has no wings to fly;
Give me the pride thy honours can impart;
Thy friendſhip give me, warm in poverty.

Give

Give me a wiſh the worldling may deride,
The wiſe may cenſure, and the proud may hate;
Wrapt in thy dreams to lay the world aſide,
And ſnatch a bliſs beyond the reach of fate.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The Party arrive at Stoney-Stratford. Meet a Stranger there, and go to the Play.

SIR Charles's poſt-coach, containing the two Mr. Barkers, Mrs. Barker and himſelf, ſet out for the hall in reaſonable time the next morning; and as Sir Charles was not at preſent engaged in any purſuit which according to his notions could juſtify going poſt, he propoſed ſleeping on the road; which, as his houſe was but ſeventy miles from London, aſtoniſhed young Barker, and delighted his father.

"How much pleaſanter and eaſier," ſaid the young man, "it is to travel poſt! I won-
"der, Sir Charles, you don't prefer it." "So
"don't I," ſaid the elder. "A merciful
"man is merciful to his beaſt. As I do not
"much believe in Pythagoras's tranſmigration
"ſcheme, I cannot wiſh thee a poſt-horſe,
"Jere; but for one cold, bleak, finger-
"ſqueezing night, I do wiſh thou waſt a
"poſt-boy; we ſhould then hear whether
"the wonder would not be, that any body
"could.

"could think of travelling poſt." The young man was a little confounded; Mrs. Barker ſighed: her reflections poſſibly led her to times when ſuch a wiſh might have had ſome probability of being accompliſhed. The old gentleman tranſlated her ſigh, and was ſenſible that it reproached him for having raiſed painful ideas in her mind: he felt that it needed an apology; he took her hand, and with a look of kindneſs put it to his lips. She was as quick at tranſlation as he, and reſumed her uſual gaiety in an inſtant.—Good company upon the road makes always the ſhorteſt cut: no wonder therefore that our party thought the day's journey to Stoney-Stratford almoſt as expeditiouſly performed as if they had travelled poſt. They arrived in good time, and having ordered tea, the gentlemen ſtrolled into the yard. "And "what parts do you uſually perform?" ſaid a voice which iſſued from behind a barn door, and which was far from being unknown to Sir Charles and young Barker. "Why, Sir," ſaid Anſwer, with a broad Iriſh accent, "I am "reckoned excellent in low comedy; Jere "Sneak, Abel Drugger, Scrub, and Juſtice "Midas. In tragedy I perform whatever the "maſter of the company bids me with pretty "equal ſucceſs." "And what," ſaid Queſtion,

tion, "may you earn a night by playing the "fool?" "Sometimes," returned Anſwer, "five ſhillings, ſometimes as many pence." "And for this," ſaid Queſtion, "you have "left your trade?" "Yes, Sir," ſaid Anſwer; "but I have the comfort of being an "honeſt man, now, which I found, if I was "determined to be in buſineſs, I could not "earn five farthings a night." "But then," ſaid Queſtion, "you had not the chance of "being whipped for a vagabond?" "The "more's the pity," ſaid Anſwer, "that I "ſhould have leſs chance of being whipped "when I was a rogue, than I have now that "I am reaſonably honeſt. But to ſay the "truth, I did not leave my trade, Sir, it left "me; I broke, Sir." "What buſineſs was "you in?" ſaid Queſtion. "I was a "haberdaſher, Sir," returned Anſwer, "and "was in a pretty good way; but I married a "handſome wife, and I loved drinking and "gaming, and ſhe, I am afraid, loved "every other vice, ſo that in a little "time ſhe ran away from me, and I "ran away from my creditors. I had "always a turn for playing the fool, ſo I "made a bold puſh, and going up to Lon-"don, I offered myſelf firſt to Mr. Garrick, "and he told me I would not do; then I

"went

" went to the other houſe, and they told " me the ſame; and then I went to Mr. " Foote, and happening to heſitate a lit- " tle in my ſpeech, he told me he had " had enough of ſtuttering Iriſhmen al- " ready; and then I went to ſing at Sadler's " Wells, and there the audience told me I " would not do; and then I went back to " the firſt theatre, and begged to be employed " as a mute or any thing; but finding I could " write and read, they took compaſſion on " me, and employed me"——" To lay the " books in the orcheſtra," interrupted young Barker, joining the party, " and there you " got drunk, and put us all out, by laying " out Midas inſtead of Harlequin Ranger, " and ſo you got kicked out of the houſe, " and what became of you afterwards, we " ſhall hear by-and-by: but firſt I muſt in- " troduce Mr. Norris, (for Queſtion was no " other) to my father."—The meeting be- tween theſe two, in a place and manner ſo unexpected, took off from the ſolemnity which would have otherwiſe attended it; but not from the cordial friendſhip of it. Mr. Barker in a few words expreſſed the obligations he had to Mr. Norris, and the happineſs he felt in an opportunity of being perſonally known to one, who, by eſpouſing the cauſe of his ſon

ſo warmly, had contributed ſo much to the happineſs of the whole family, the reſt of the party felt that joy which every one can ſo eaſily conceive at a meeting between people in their ſituation. All this time poor Anſwer ſtood up in one corner in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment, endeavouring in vain to gueſs who that gentleman could be who knew ſo much of his concerns. "And what became of you afterwards?" ſaid young Barker. Anſwer made a low bow. "Why, really, Sir," ſaid he, "ſince that time I have lived a ſort of a kind "of a ſtrolling life, ſometimes with one "company, ſometimes with another. I ſeldom ſtay long indeed in a company, be"cauſe as I am pretty much given to living "upon truſt, when they who do know me "will not truſt me any longer, I am obliged "to have recourſe to them who do not. Your "honour ſeems to have had ſome knowledge "of me, poſſibly you may have been no "ſtranger to this part of my character; if "your honour has any demand upon me, you "could not make it at a worſe time." "You "need not be afraid, Sir," ſaid young Barker: "at the time I knew you, there was but lit"tle danger of any body's running in my debt; "at preſent the caſe is altered; ſo if you will "accept of this for old acquaintance ſake, I

"pro-

"promiſe you before this company never to "expect it of you again." Anſwer made a "low bow." "Who you are, Sir," ſaid he, "I am ſure I ſhall not preſume to inquire; it "is ſufficient for me that you are the moſt "honourable gentleman I ever met with. If "your honours will favour us with your com-"pany to-night, we will do our beſt to enter-"tain you. We are to play the Orphan; "and as it is for the benefit of our firſt actreſs, "ſhe and I are to dance a hornpipe after the "ſecond act, and I am to ſing the Cries of "London after the play." "Surely," ſaid old Barker, "you don't ſuit your entertain-"ments well to the ſolemnity of the play." "O, Sir," replied he, "Contraſt, contraſt "is the beauty of a performance."

The company ſmiled, and promiſing to be at the theatre in the evening, adjourned to their tea.—Mrs. Barker was equally ſurprized and pleaſed to meet Mr. Norris, as, next to her huſband, he was the man in the world for whom ſhe had the greateſt eſteem: and old Mr. Barker could not help renewing his acknowledgments to him upon his expreſſing his joy at ſeeing his daughter, which was very great, for ſhe had gained his eſteem and veneration by the moſt engaging of all virtues, patient reſignation under unmerited ill-uſage.

Sir Charles was not ſorry to interrupt a converſation which was taking too tender a turn, by inquiring of Mr. Norris how things went on at the hall. "Why troth," replied he, "bad enough I believe for you, though well "enough for me: becauſe as you have a good "houſe already, and I had a very bad one, "I choſe to make them cover mine in before "they ſet about making any alterations in "yours; by which means they are not ſo for-"ward in your improvements as poſſibly you "might expect: but as your's is chiefly inſide "work, they can go on with it in winter as "well as in ſummer, ſo that every thing will "be finiſhed by the ſpring; which, from "your late letters, is, I fancy, as ſoon as you "will want to come down." Sir Charles ſighed. "You then, Norris," ſaid he, "are "quite in order, and fit to receive any body "who will do you the honour to come and "ſit down with you?" "Indeed I am," replied he, "and if you had not come down now, "I do believe I ſhould have aſked ſomebody "or other, for I really begin to be tired of "living alone: if you don't marry ſoon, Sir "Charles, I muſt abſolutely marry in my "own defence." "Apropos!" ſaid Sir Charles, "you are going to be married, Nor-"ris; that is, you are very much in love,

"and

"and I believe the lady has no great objection "to you." "Indeed!" cried he, "I am "heartily glad to hear it. Pray who is this "condescending lady? where did we meet?" "O," said Sir Charles, "you never have "met yet: people of your consequence do "all these things by proxy, and as I am agent "for you both, it is hard if I cannot make "you agree." "Why this is better and "better," replied Norris: "to have a wife "found out, courted, and all ready to one's "hands, is the cleverest thing in the world; "only let me know before you fix the day, "because this is absolutely the best coat I have "to my back, and it begins to look dingy." Sir Charles promised he would at least do that, and having by this time finished their tea, they adjourned to the play.

The company came in but slow, and the play was not likely to begin till at least an hour after the time mentioned in the bills; and as one blind fidler, who played two tunes and a bit, was not likely to afford them much amusement, Mr. J. Barker had a mind for a little more conversation with his friend the actor. He therefore dispatched the fidler's boy to call Mr. Bond; Mr. Bond was dressing for *Chamont*; but as he had nothing more to do, than to shake a little flour into his hair, and tie a

black crape round the ſleeve of his reddiſh coat by way of apology for black waiſtcoat and breeches, the wardrobe not allowing red ones, he ſoon appeared. The figure he made, conſidering him as *Chamont*, was ridiculous enough, for he was near forty years of age, very fat and aukward, which appearance, ſet off with a ſtrong brogue in his pronunciation, agreed very ill with the idea of a polite gallant young officer. Young Barker took the liberty to tell him that he thought he might have played *Acaſto* better. "Yes, Sir," ſaid he, "but that part has been long in keeping "by an old woman who has belonged to the "company many years, and who does not "care to part with it." "A woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Barker. "Yes, Madam," replied he, "our company is but thin, and we "are often obliged to put ſex out of the queſ-"tion in caſting our plays: laſt night I played "Queen Elizabeth, and the old woman the "Earl of Eſſex. If your ladyſhip pleaſes to "look over this bill, you will find that we "dont ſtand much upon ſuch trifles." Mrs. Barker took the bill, and read as follows:

At

At the Theatre in Stoney-Stratford,

This preſent WEDNESDAY,

Will be performed a Concert of MUSIC.

Between the Acts of the Concert will be given, *gratis*, a TRAGEDY, called

The ORPHAN,

OR THE

Unhappy Marriage.

Acaſto by Mrs. BURTON.

Caſtalio by Mr. HARRIS.

Polydore by Miſs ACKMAN.

Chamont by Mr. BOND

With the Cries of LONDON.

Chaplain by Mrs. FORD.

Page by Mr. HARRIS, Sen.

Serina by Mrs. JOHNSON.

And *Monimia* by Mrs. BOND.

With a Hornpipe.

To begin at Seven o'Clock, more or leſs.

"Is your Lady, Sir, an actreſs in this com-
"pany?" ſaid Mrs. Barker. "Humph!
"No, Madam, replied Mr. Bond; "this is
"a lady who chooſes to conceal her own
"name, and ſo does me the honour to go by
"mine."—By this time the *valet de theatre* had lighted twelve of the fifteen tallow candles, and the fidler had begun what was called the laſt muſic, which indeed might as well have been called the firſt, as he had continued to torment his original two tunes and a bit without intermiſſion, from the time he began. And now the curtain drew *on one ſide*, and Mr. Bond took his leave, in order to perform the part of prompter till he was wanted on the ſtage: by which occupation he might be ſaid to be the principal performer, as he repeated the whole of every part in ſo diſtinct and audible a tone, that the performers on the ſtage ſtrutted his echoes; only Miſs Ackman, in *Polydore*, came after him an octave above, which gave the effect of a man and his wife ſinging ballads on each ſide of a ſtreet.——Every thing went on ſmooth and well, till *Chamont* was wanted on the ſtage: the office of prompter being then transferred to the candle-ſnuffer, it often happened that when an actor was at a loſs, which was the caſe every other line, the unfortunate prompter was

was more ſo; for though they repeated very ill, he read much worſe. The effects this produced were very diverting, as the actors and prompter were frequently all at croſs purpoſes through a whole ſcene. At laſt, Miſs Ackman was quite out of patience, and finding that ſhe could not go on by herſelf, and that the prompter could not aſſiſt her, ſhe choſe to act up to her aſſumed character, and catching hold of the poor prompter by the collar, ſhe dragged him upon the ſtage, kicked him on the other ſide, and ſnatching the book out of his hand, proceeded to read her part through with great compoſure.

Sir Charles and his company thought they had ſeen as good a ſcene as they ſhould ſee, and ſo retired to their ſupper, which was by this time waiting for them.

CHAP. III.

Sir Charles arrives at the Hall, and finds his Neighbours under a great Miſtake. A Compariſon. The Miſtake propagated. The Miſtake rectified.

MR. J. Barker being the firſt who was ſtirring in the morning, entered into another converſation with his friend the actor, whom he found in the barn, tacking ſome white paper lace upon an old brown coat, and an older blue waiſtcoat, in which he was to play *Sir Novelty Faſhion* the ſucceeding evening. He found him a very facetious fellow, and in the half hour's converſation which he had with him, till he was ſummoned to breakfaſt, he learned not only the player's own adventures, but thoſe of his wife too; which, to ſay the truth, were the more extraordinary of the two, as ſhe had been engaged in many ſcenes of life worth relating. Mr. Barker obſerved to him, that it was rather extraordinary that a man ſo well qualified to be her hiſtorian, ſhould ever think of being her huſband.

band. "Alas! Sir," replied he, "I knew "nothing of the worſt of her pranks till very "lately: when I married her, I thought ſhe "was nothing worſe than a great man's caſt-"off miſtreſs." "What is become of her?" ſaid Mr. Barker. "I really do not know, "Sir," replied he, "and that is my misfor-"tune; for if I could but find her, and per-"ſuade her to join the company, we ſhould "get money enough; for ſhe has ſo much im-"pudence, and ſo good a command of her "features, to ſay nothing of a ſpecial ſtrong "voice, as heaven knows, and I know, that "I am convinced ſhe would make a capital "actreſs. But I fear ſhe has too good "friends." "Is that a thing to be feared?" ſaid Mr. Barker. "Yes, Sir," replied he, "a man in general has no worſe enemies "than his wife's friends, eſpecially if ſhe "happens to be handſome." Mr. Barker laughed, and telling him that he hoped he might find more friends, and his wife fewer, returned to his company.

The party arrived ſafe at the hall by dinner, amidſt the acclamations of tenants, and ringing of bells. Never was a landlord more truly beloved in a pariſh than Sir Charles. He was therefore not at all ſurprized to find his neighbours and tenants collected to receive him

with a chearfulneſs in their looks ariſing from the pleaſure of ſeeing their landlord and the hopes of a barrel of ale: but he found this extraordinary concourſe and glee aroſe from another cauſe. A confuſed rumour had ſpread abroad that Sir Charles was going to be married, and one of the young farmers having ſeen the coach the evening before at Stratford, rode forward in a great hurry, and arriving at the blackſmith's ſhop, where ſeveral of the neighbours were aſſembled upon various occaſions, reported that he had ſeen Sir Charles's coach at Stratford, with two gentlemen in it, and as fine a lady as ever the ſun ſhone upon. "Ten to one it is his wife," ſaid one. "Like "enough," ſaid a ſecond. "Is Sir Charles "married?" ſaid a third. "Yes, and my "lady is coming with him now," ſaid a fourth. And ſo, as the buſineſs of getting a horſe ſhod, a plough-ſhare mended, a new link to a bucket, a ſcythe ground, or playing at quoits, makes the blackſmith's ſhop the general rendezvous of a pariſh in an evening, the affair was ſettled in an inſtant; and a reſolution taken to ring the bells, and huzza Sir Charles and his bride down to the houſe; where they hoped to drink their healths, and wiſh them joy. They were a good deal diſappointed at finding that their conjectures were ill-grounded;

ed; but upon the beſt part of their hopes being accompliſhed by the appearance of the ale, their diſappointment began to wear off, and by the evening quite diſappeared.—The miſtake afforded ſome diverſion in the family, though they would have been glad to have had it end there. But unfortunately Mr. Poundem the apothecary happening to ride by the church juſt as the ringers were coming out of the belfry, he ſtopped his horſe to aſk what they had been ringing for, and was informed that Sir Charles Beville had brought his lady down. The miſchief was done: it was as eaſy to ſtop the contents of a muſquet after the trigger was pulled, as to ſtop the progreſs of a report when once Mr. Poundem had got hold of it. Sir Charles's good genius however did his beſt, by ſuggeſting to Mr. Poundem that he ought to take the earlieſt opportunity of paying his reſpects to the new-married couple; that poſſibly Lady Beville might ſome time or other have occaſion for him; that now Sir Charles would probably reſide more in the country, and with an increaſe of family, and that therefore he could not be too early in paying his compliments. In vain were all theſe ſuggeſtions, the pleaſure of carrying the news firſt to Lord Timon's outweighed them all. And indeed with reaſon; for there was no

part of his ſkill which brought him in ſo much cuſtom as his abilities in news-carrying; for which reaſon he dealt more in news than in any other drug. He knew ten times more than any one elſe in the country; and he told ten times more than he knew: and it turned to excellent account. Agues and ſore throats might find him employment in the ſpring and autumn; but curioſity he found was an epidemical diſeaſe, which required his aſſiſtance all the year round. "Doctor, what's good for "a fever?" was a queſtion confined to a few; but, "Doctor, what news?" was in every one's mouth; and he took care accordingly to be at leaſt as well qualified to anſwer the one as the other.—In general, whether in town or country, an apothecary in good practice is the architype of his own great funnel. Whatever he receives from one veſſel he delivers, a little filtred, into another; and though he has little or nothing in himſelf, by frequent uſing he gets a ſmack and flavour as it were of whatever was poured through him laſt, and retains it till it is waſhed out by ſomething elſe. They differ only in two reſpects; firſt, that the funnel receives in large quantities, and pours out by degrees; whereas the apothecary receives by degrees, and pours out by wholeſale. Secondly, that the funnel can only pour out what

what it receives, and ſometimes not ſo much; whereas the apothecary pours out not only all that was poured in, but frequently a great deal more. Theſe two circumſtances being excepted, your apothecary is a funnel.——Our funnel arrived at Lord Timon's juſt as the chaplain was ſaying grace.——"Name be praiſed." "Amen Sir Charles Beville's married," cried Funnel without ſtop or breath between.

By great ill luck for Sir Charles, and by as good for Poundem, there happened to be a great deal of company aſſembled at Lord Timon's; ſo that, "Is he?" "Is "he really!" Is he indeed!" iſſued from forty mouths.

Unfortunately for Funnel, "To whom?" ſucceeded from as many. Nothing with regard to this had been poured in; but, as ſomething muſt come out, he could only ſay, "A lady from London:" which being far from ſatisfying the curioſity of any one preſent, each perſon determined to ſend a card of congratulation the next morning, in hopes of learning from the ſervants ſomething about the new Lady Beville.

"I ſup-

"I ſuppoſe ſhe was a great fortune," ſaid an old lady with two handſome daughters, without much elſe to recommend them. "Or a great beauty," ſaid a young lady, whoſe eyes had got a trick of looking after each other. "Some "young thing or other," ſaid Miſs Autumn, with a toſs of her head. All which obſervations tranſlated into plain Engliſh, amounted to no more than—"I think Sir "Charles might as well have had me."

Sir Charles was all this time enjoying the innocent miſtake of his neighbours, little ſuſpecting that he ſhould hear any more of it; but, in the morning, when he entered the breakfaſt room, he found Norris and young Barker enjoying themſelves over ſeveral cards, which, ſo great was the impatience of ſome good ladies in the neighbourhood to hear who it was that Sir Charles had preferred to their daughters and nieces, had arrived before any body was ſtirring, with congratulations and how d'yes. Sir Charles could not help joining in the laugh, till he found them come thicker and faſter, and then he began to think ſomebody or other had been very impertinent. However, he was ſufficiently revenged upon the author of all this

blunder,

blunder, for, upon ſetting them all right, poor Poundem was ſo abuſed for a lying hiſtorian, that for the next month nobody put any more faith in him than in the Bruſſels Gazette.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

What passed at Sir Harry Clayton's after the arrival of Mrs. Stapleton.

WHILST Sir Charles is employed in feasting his tenants, and distributing his Christmas benefactions of coals, beef, bread, beer, great coats and flannel petticoats, to the poor people, we will just take a trip across the country, reader, and see what is going forward at Sir Harry Clayton's.

By the time Mrs. Stapleton arrived, the whole family had their grievances ready to lay before her: for, as she was the common friend of the family, every part of it flew to her for advice, or consolation, or pity, or congratulation, just as the case happened to be. When they had any thing to complain of against the rest of the world, which affected them jointly as a family, they generally came to her open-mouthed all together: but when, which was much oftener the case, they had any reason to complain of each other, they endeavoured separately to get her into corners, and each used every possible contrivance to influence

fluence her judgment in their favour. The preſent grievances were of this caſt. Lady Clayton wanted to complain of Sir Harry; Sir Harry of Sir Iſaac; Sir Iſaac of Miſs Clayton; and Miſs Clayton of every body. Mrs. Stapleton arrived about noon; as ſoon therefore as ſhe had been received and welcomed in form, ſhe retired to dreſs for dinner of courſe. Miſs Clayton attended her to her apartment, and by that means got the ſtart: nor did ſhe neglect her opportunity. "O my dear Staple-"ton," cried ſhe before ſhe had got her hand off the lock of the door, "how have I been "tormented ſince I ſaw you!" "Probably," replied Mrs. Stapleton, "you don't approve "of Sir Iſaac's ſtile of making love." "Mak-"ing love, my dear," returned Miſs Clayton, "he makes nothing but faces: he is too "proud to make love, and too inſolent even "to aſk a favour: he ſeems to think no wo-"man can have the aſſurance to refuſe him; "and when he does vouchſafe to ſpeak, it is "only to ſet forth his own importance, and "to make it appear how great an honour he "does me in preferring me to ſo many ladies "who would be ready to aſk him, if they "dared. This is a language you know which "young ladies are but little uſed to, and if I "pluck up courage enough to tell him ſo, or

"pretend

"I pretend to demur a little upon the point,
"the wretch flies into a fit of the ſullens,
"bounces away to my mother-in-law, ſays I
"uſe him like a dog, won't ſpeak a word all
"the reſt of the day, and then it muſt be
"the work of the whole family to bring him
"into temper again; and this is a lover, for-
"ſooth!" "I am moſt heartily glad of it,"
replied Mrs. Stapleton;" every thing goes on
"juſt as I would wiſh. How does Sir Harry
"like this method of making love?" "Why,
"to ſay the truth," replied Miſs Clayton,
"he begins to be a little ſick of his ſon-in-
"law; for Sir Iſaac and he have very fre-
"quent and very long diſputes about the ad-
"vantages of family; in which Lady Clay-
"ton is forced to moderate as well as ſhe can,
"or I verily believe it would have come to
"a quarrel long ago. I ventured once or
"twice to complain to my father of his be-
"haviour, and he ſeemed to liſten to me,
"and even to have ſome thoughts of break-
"ing with him; but unfortunately my lady
"had the addreſs, in their next converſation,
"to ſuggeſt the probability of Sir Iſaac's be-
"ing prevailed on to purchaſe a barony,
"which undid in an inſtant all that I had
"been labouring at for ſeveral days."
"That was a fetch," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton,

"rather

" rather above the uſual contrivance of her " ladyſhip; but I think we may be able to " over-rule that." " O my dear Stapleton," ſaid Miſs Clayton, " all my hopes of com- " fort are in you." " Well, well," replied ſhe, " don't be diſcouraged; every thing " muſt go as we would have it; in the mean " time there is ſomething to keep up your " ſpirits." " A letter!" cried Miſs Clayton. " Cruel Mrs. Stapleton, not to give it me in " all this time!" Mrs. Stapleton left her friend to enjoy her letter by herſelf, and going down ſtairs, ſhe found Sir Harry walking in the hall, ready to catch her before ſhe could reach the drawing-room.

" My dear Mrs. Stapleton," cried he, " you find a very diſtracted family here; I " am ſorry to find your friend Harriet ſo ſet " againſt a match which Lady Clayton and " I have ſo much at heart for her, and which " I believe indeed is as good a one as ſhe " can expect. We muſt be obliged to you " for your mediation in this affair; ſhe will " liſten to you more than to any body, I " know, and—" " I am rather ſurprized, " Sir Harry," interrupted Mrs. Stapleton, " to find that you are ſo warmly attached to " Sir Iſaac Rupee. I was aware of Lady " Clayton's partiality to him; but I ſhould

" think,

" think, if you conſider the rank which your " daughter has a right to expect to marry into," (Sir Harry hemmed, and held up his head) " and compare it with Sir Iſaac's, you would " not be ſo eager to promote the alliance: his " father, Sir, I am informed, was but a ticket-" porter." Sir Harry turned pale, and took three ſteps backwards. " A ticket-porter!— " Gracious heaven!" exclaimed he, " a ticket " porter!—" " Come, come, Sir Harry," ſaid Mrs. Stapleton, " you and I muſt have a " long converſation upon this ſubject. I have " too great a regard for your happineſs and " Harriet's, as well as for the honour of your " family, to ſee you ſurrounded with uncles " and couſins in chairmen's great-coats and " leather aprons, without ſhewing you the " danger, at leaſt." Lady Clayton that inſtant appearing at the head of the ſtairs, Sir Harry ſqueezed Mrs. Stapleton's hand, and muttering " A ticket porter!" followed her into the drawing-room. Sir Iſaac was already there. Sir Harry made a ſlight bow, and flinging himſelf into a chair oppoſite to Sir Iſaac, who was reading a news-paper, eyed him from head to foot: the idea of a ticket-porter ſtuck to every part of him, and uglied him all over. He read a paragraph to the company about ſome change in the adminiſtration,

tration, and gave his opinion that it was probably true. Sir Harry contradicted him flat. How ſhould a ticket-porter, thought he, know any thing of court-buſineſs. Miſs Clayton entered the room, and Sir Iſaac, with rather more ſhew of gallantry than he was uſually guilty of, in order to appear well in the eyes of Mrs. Stapleton, advanced a few ſteps, and taking her hand, told her ſhe looked charmingly. Sir Harry reddened. "Pray, Miſs "Clayton," ſaid he, "do me the favour to "fetch my ſpectacles out of the next room." What has a ticket-porter, thought he, to do with my daughter's hand. In ſhort, which ever way he viewed him, *en face*, *en profile*, *au devant*, *au derriere*, ſtill the idea of a ticket-porter ſtuck to him, and uglied him all over. He did not ſay a thing all day that Sir Harry did not contradict: he praiſed the ſoup at dinner; diabolical ſoup, thought Sir Harry, but good enough for ticket-porters. He complained it was cold; Sir Harry unbuttoned another button of his waiſtcoat; thy knot, honeſt man, thought he, and a good load, would warm thee. Sir Harry aſked for his toaſt, he gave a lady of the bed-chamber: Sir Harry bluſhed; the Queen's head at a gin-ſhop was the idea that ſtruck him. In ſhort, whatever he ſaid or did, Sir Harry tacked the knot

knot and white apron to it, and treated it accordingly. Mrs. Stapleton, who was the only perſon who had any notion of what paſſed in Sir Harry's mind, watched every turn of his countenance, and was rejoiced to find the doſe which ſhe had given him operate as ſhe would have it. After the cloth had been removed the uſual time, the ladies made a motion to retire; but Sir Harry, foreſeeing how much he ſhould be diſtreſſed to keep his temper in a tête-à-tête with Sir Iſaac, oppoſed it with ſo much earneſtneſs, that they were forced to comply. Lady Clayton indeed was not very difficult to perſuade; for, without knowing Sir Harry's freſh cauſe of diſguſt, ſhe knew their tempers and diſpoſitions to be ſo oppoſite, except that pride and petulance had a pretty large ſhare in the compoſition of both, that ſhe dreaded a quarrel every time they were left by themſelves. Mrs. Stapleton and Miſs Clayton, who had not the ſame reaſons for dreading a rupture between them as Lady Clayton had, would have been glad to have given them every opportunity; but as Mrs. Stapleton had many other incendiary anecdotes to communicate to Sir Harry, ſhe thought it might be as well to let things reſt till ſhe had thoroughly loaded him with intelligence, that the exploſion, when it happened, might

might be the more violent and effectual.—Never was an appearance of civility and good-humour kept up with more difficulty on all ſides, than it was that evening; and had it not been for the relief which a pool at quadrille afforded them, I know not whether they would have been able to carry it through. As it was, the coldneſs, frequently approaching very near to rudeneſs, with which Sir Harry treated Sir Iſaac, could not paſs unnoticed even by Lady Clayton, though not the moſt penetrating perſon in the world. Nor was Sir Iſaac himſelf without ſome ſuſpicions. It was not therefore till after Mrs. Stapleton had five times looked at her watch, and ten times complained of being fatigued with her journey, that Lady Clayton would conſent to retiring to reſt. At laſt however, upon Mrs. Stapleton's ringing for her ſervant, ſhe was obliged to comply, and leave the gentlemen to themſelves. She need not have been afraid; they were neither of them in a humour for ſitting long. Sir Harry was afraid of his own temper; Sir Iſaac was afraid of ſomething, he could not preciſely ſay what, and in a few minutes after the ladies were gone, he rang for his ſervant, and wiſhed Sir Harry a good night. Sir Harry with much coolneſs returned the compliment, and as ſoon as his back was turned, he ſhook

his head, reſumed his chair, and ſat with his eyes fixed upon the fire; in which attitude he continued in what is called a brown ſtudy, till Lady Clayton's bell rang, when he ſtarted from his reverie, and muttering "A ticket porter!" obeyed the ſummons. "Pray, Sir "Harry," ſaid Lady Clayton, as he entered the room, "vat has been the matter between "Sir Iſaac and you?" "Nothing," replied he. "I am ſure," ſaid ſhe, "he has done "ſomething to offend you, for I never know'd "you ſo rude in my whole life, as you have "been to him to-night." "He never of-"fended me," ſaid Sir Harry, "'twas his "father." "His father," replied ſhe, "vy did you know his father?" "No, nor "he neither, moſt probably," cried Sir Harry. "Come, come," ſaid ſhe, "you have got "ſome fooliſh crotchet in your head now."— "I believe I have," returned he, "for, as "Squire Sullen ſays, it aches conſumedly, "and ſo I wiſh you a good night, Ma-"dam."

Lady Clayton found there was nothing to be learned from him in the temper he was in, ſo had recourſe to her pillow, and her own conjectures, to help her to the cauſe of the quarrel; but with as little ſucceſs. If her pillow however did not help her to the know-

ledge

ledge which ſhe wanted, it helped her to a comfortable nap; in which ſhe had the advantage of Sir Harry, who, whenever he attempted to cloſe his eyes, was ſo haunted with porters, chairmen, hackney-coachmen, and all the *canaille* of Fleet-ditch, that he got not a wink of ſleep that night.—His daughter, whoſe reſt had been diſturbed alſo, though by a ſpectre of a more agreeable kind, was in the breakfaſt room as early as himſelf the next morning; ſhe happened indeed to be there firſt, and, not unluckily for her, was engaged when he entered in reading Collins's Peerage, which together with the Court Kalendar, always lay in the window. "Don't let me diſturb you, "my dear," ſaid he, ſeeing her going to lay down the book, "I love to ſee young women "uſefully employed. You will find there "many of your illuſtrious anceſtors, which, "by the help of the table I have drawn up at "the end, you may trace with their collaterals down to your grand-mother, who was "a Scroop." "Yes, Sir," replied Miſs Clayton, "I ſee her father was brother to "Lord ——, and was groom-porter to George "the Firſt." The circumſtance was fortunate; it called up all the blood in Sir Harry's body into his face. "He was, Miſs," ſaid he with an emotion, the cauſe of which

ſhe could not comprehend; "and ſhall the "blood of the Scroops and Claytons, which "has ran pure and unmixed through the veins "of lords of the bed-chamber, vice-cham-"berlains, grooms of the bed-chamber, maſ-"ters of the ceremonies, and groom-porters, "be contaminated with a filthy mixture of "that puddle which animates ticket-porters "and fiſh-women? Forbid it, heaven!" Miſs Clayton was aſtoniſhed. Mrs. Stapleton coming in at that inſtant, "Step up, my "dear," ſaid Sir Harry to Miſs Clayton, "to Lady Clayton, and aſk her if ſhe is "ready for breakfaſt, for I am obliged to go "to Lord L.'s this morning, and I ſhall be "too late." "O, my dear Mrs. Stapleton," continued he, "what you told me yeſterday "of this Sir Iſaac's deſcent, has diſturbed me "beyond meaſure; I have not had a wink of "ſleep ſince I ſaw you. I cannot tell how I "ſhall keep my temper with the wretch, and "yet I don't know how to get rid of him "neither." "I hope, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Sta-pleton, "you have not given him your abſo-"lute promiſe that he ſhall be your ſon-in-"law." "Why," returned he, "I muſt "acknowledge Lady Clayton did draw me in "to make ſome ſuch promiſe; but then Har-"riet being of age, I could not abſolutely

"engage

" engage to make her marry him; and I have
" no other hope than in her obſtinacy; for
" to be ſure Lady Clayton and myſelf are
" both bound to give him all the aſſiſtance in
" our power; but if ſhe will be obſtinate, you
" know——" " O," cried Mrs. Stapleton,
" if that be all that is wanting, I think I
" can engage for her obſtinacy; for really,
" Sir Harry, you cannot imagine what a jeſt
" it would be to all your relations, and in-
" deed to all the world, to ſee your daughter,
" Sir Harry Clayton's daughter, married to
" a man whoſe father was a porter, and
" whoſe brother is at this time a cheeſe-mon-
" ger in Tooley-Street. Think of that, Sir,
" think of your daughter in white and ſilver,
" with a crane-necked chariot, and long
" tailed horſes, ſetting out to viſit her ſiſter
" in Tooley-Street." " You petrify me,
" Madam," cried Sir Harry. " O my dear
" Sir," cried ſhe, " that is nothing; he has
" a ſiſter, whoſe huſband keeps a ſlop-ſhop in
" Crutched-Friars, and who actually ſtands
" behind the counter herſelf, ſerving ſailors
" with check ſhirts, hammocks, and jackets
" and trowſers." " Mercy upon me!" cried
Sir Harry, " Mercy upon me! what an
" eſcape have I had! I will break with him
" this inſtant: an impudent ſcoundrel, to

"have the assurance to think of dragging my "Harriet to play at Pope Joan, and Com- "merce, in Tooley-Street and Crutched- "Friars!" "Softly, Sir Harry," said Mrs. Stapleton; "give me leave to advise you to "go a little coolly to work: he at present "has the good opinion of Lady Clayton, and "I think it may be as well not to exasperate "her too much by a sudden quarrel; be so "good as to talk a little with her ladyship; "in the mean time let matters rest: Sir Isaac, "when he finds your behaviour to him more "cool than usual, will suspect that his com- "pany is not very agreeable here, and possibly "his pride may take the alarm, and make him "quit his pretensions of his own accord, and "that will save you a great deal of trouble." "My dear Madam," cried Sir Harry, "I "am bound to you for ever; let me but get rid "of this wretch, and I don't care if the girl "has not another offer this twelvemonth." The rest of the company entering at this minute, broke off the conversation. Whether Sir Isaac had overheard any part of it, or whether he had discovered any thing particular in Sir Harry's behaviour, I cannot tell, but he sat swelling in very ill-humour, during the time of breakfast, and hardly vouchsafed an answer to all the civil things which Lady

Clayton

Clayton said to him to make amends for the coolness of the rest of the company; which was, to say the truth, pretty conspicuous. Sir Harry however told him, that he was going to make a morning visit to Lord L. and asked if he would favour him with his company; to which he replied, "No, Sir. I have "letters to write of more consequence to me "than dangling after lords." After breakfast Sir Harry went to make his visit, Sir Isaac to write his letters, and the ladies were left to muslin and catgut; which produced the conversation to be found in the next chapter.

CHAP. V.

A Converſation Piece.

Mrs. Stapleton. —"DANGLING after lords!—" What airs of importance theſe purſe-proud, new-made gentry give themſelves! I dare ſay that man thinks his money ſets him above every perſon in the world who has not ſo much.

Lady Clayton. Vy really I think money is the moſt uſeful thing, and ſo the moſt honourable; but it makes ſome folks prouder than otherſome. Laud! Miſs Clayton, have not you done that poor apron yet? But you read ſo much, it is no vonder your vork goes on ſo ſlow. If you and Sir Iſaac come together, you'll read for him and yourſelf too, for he ſays he never reads any thing but the papers.

Miſs Clayton. I queſtion, Madam, whether he can read any thing elſe.

Lady Clay. Vy I ſuppoſe, Miſs, if he can read them, he can read any thing; for there's as hard reading in the news-papers as any vere.

Mrs.

Mrs. Stap. (*ſtifling a laugh.*) Harriet, lend me a needle. You ſhould not undervalue Sir Iſaac's education, child; he was brought up at St. Bride's charity-ſchool, and could read and write and caſt accompts before Sir Francis Tradewell, the India-director, took him.

Lady Clay. Sir Iſaac brought up at a charity ſchool!

Mrs. Stap. Yes, Madam, and a very good education too for a younger ſon, conſidering his father could not earn above twelve or fourteen ſhillings a week.

Lady Clay. Vy, vat vas his father?

Mrs. Stap. A porter, Madam.—Harriet, will your thimble fit me?

Miſs Clay. A porter!——A porter!

Lady Clay. Vy then as ſure as you are alive that vas vat Sir Harry meant laſt night, ven he ſaid he vas'nt offended with him, but his father. Vell, 'tis no matter, he has money enough now, and may be a lord ven he likes. Pray, Miſs, lend me your thread-paper.—— Your thread-paper, I ſaid, Miſs, not your huſwife: you don't know vat you're about.

Miſs Clay. I beg your ladyſhip's pardon, I was thinking of Sir Iſaac in a band, and a brown cap, with an orange coloured rib-band.

Lady Clay. No matter vat he vas, Miſs; vat he is, is the queſtion.

Mrs. Stap. Why, as your ladyſhip ſays, it is ſo; and yet ſpiteful people will be apt to remember, eſpecially when there happens to be a good parcel of poor relations to put them in mind. By the way, Harriet, you will find your diſlike to cheeſe a monſtrous inconvenience, for I queſtion whether your ſiſter in Tooley-Street has any way into her houſe but through the ſhop.

Lady Clay. } For goodneſs ſake, what do
Miſs Clay. } you mean?

Mrs. Stap. Ha! ha! ha! Why did not your ladyſhip know, that Sir Iſaac has a brother a cheeſe-monger in Tooley-Street? Indeed he has, and four or five great nephews at St. Paul's ſchool, who in a year or two will be bound apprentices to grocers, tallow-chandlers, and oil-men. I hope, Harriet, you'll deal all amongſt your relations.

Miſs Clay. Theſe are the connections your ladyſhip has picked out for me.

Lady Clay. I proteſt I never heard of this before. I cannot ſay as I like poor relations, becauſe they muſt be maintained for one's own credit; but one family is not ſo much.

Mrs. Stap. O, dear Madam, this brother's family would be nothing as to the matter of main-

maintaining, becauſe I hear they are in very good circumſtances. But there is a ſiſter married to a man who keeps a ſlop-ſhop in Crutched-Friars, with a family five times as large as the cheeſe-monger's, who I am informed can hardly live. Poor things! Harriet, you won't let your nephews and nieces come to the pariſh.

Miſs Clayton. And does Sir Iſaac do nothing for them?

Mrs. Stapleton. Not that ever I heard. O my dear Harriet! poſſibly you may not have obſerved, that when once the idea of money has got poſſeſſion of a man's ſoul, he is from that inſtant deaf to every call of generoſity, liberality, or even humanity: ſhut up in himſelf, he never beſtows a thought on the reſt of mankind; I never, ſays he, meddle with other people's concerns. Talk to ſuch a man of ſocial endearments, ſentimental enjoyments, and the happineſs ariſing from the finer and more exquiſite feelings of the ſoul, and your language will be as abſolutely unintelligible to him, as if you ſpoke Arabic. Don't you remember what *La Bruiere* ſays? *Un bon financier ne pleure ni ſes amis, ni ſa femme, ni ſes enfans.* Talk to him, again, of the pleaſures ariſing from muſic, painting, poetry, or any of the polite arts; of the ſatisfaction ariſing

from works of genius and imagination, he ſhakes his head, and calls it all loſs of time, and hindrance of buſineſs. Homer and Virgil were, in his opinion, infinitely below Cocker and Wingate, and the only valuable thing ever imported from Italy, was the Italian method of book-keeping.

Miſs Clayton. O my dear Stapleton, what a character have you drawn! and can your ladyſhip think that any advantage can be an equivalent for paſſing one's life with ſuch a man?

Lady Clay. Vy really, Miſs, if, as Mrs. Stapleton ſays, he has ſuch a number of poor relations, I don't ſee as one ſhall be much the better for his money.

Mrs. Stap. I would not be impertinent, Madam, nor wiſh to interfere in the affairs of your family farther than I have your ladyſhip's permiſſion to do; but the regard I have for all parts of it, will not ſuffer me to be ſilent upon this head. You cannot imagine, Madam, the number of inconveniences ſuch an alliance would bring upon you. Your ladyſhip's family has always been upon a very reſpectable footing in the world.

Lady Clay. Yes, thank G—d, I never was plagued with a poor relation as I know of.

Mrs.

Mrs. Stap. —Sir Harry is on all ſides nobly allied; think then, Madam, what a triumph it would be to your enemies, if you have any, and what a mortification to your friends, to hear, on all ſides, of your daughter's relations, her brothers waiting in the halls of people who would otherwiſe be aſhamed of taking place of her, in any aſſembly in town; whilſt her nephews are running about the town in brown ſleeves, and leather aprons. How would your ladyſhip like to hear any one ſay, "I don't know "how rich or how fine Lady Rupee may be; "but I know her brother ſells me horrid "Cheſhire-cheeſe, for which I ſhall give the "raſcal a good talk the next time I meet "him."

Lady Clay. Vy to be ſure one is apt to talk in that way of one's tradesfolks; and yet trade is a very good thing.

Mrs. Stap. And tradesfolks are very good people, Madam; only let them keep in their own places; particularly the lower claſs. If Sir Iſaac's brother was an opulent merchant, it would be another caſe; I don't know a more uſeful or a more reſpectable character.

Lady Clay. No ſure!

Mrs. Stapleton. —But really a cheeſemonger, and a ſlop-ſhop, and forty other little

trades beſides, are not a proper ſtile of life for your daughter to be thrown into.

Lady Clay. Indeed I did not think he had been ſo low; but Sir Harry is always ſo fond of lords and dukes, and I cannot tell vat, who are generally as poor as Job, that I thought it vould be better for Miſs Clayton to have a huſband who could lend money, rather than one who vould vant to borrow it, and that vas all my reaſon for encouraging Sir Iſaac.

Mrs. Stap. Your ladyſhip ſhewed much prudence in your opinion; but I dare ſay you will agree with me, that gold may be bought too dear, and that our Harriet may meet with a match with which prudence may be very well ſatisfied, without ſacrificing every other conſideration to a regard for money.

Miſs Clay. Believe me, Madam, I never will liſten to any propoſal which my father or your ladyſhip ſhall think imprudent, only let me be delivered from this wretch, who is my averſion.

Lady Clay. I am ſure, Miſs Clayton, I am far from wiſhing you to accept of any man who would be an improper huſband for you; much leſs ſhould I viſh to ſee you ſurrounded with poor relations in leather-aprons, as Mrs. Stapleton ſays; and now there is no danger of your having that fooliſh

lord

lord that your papa vas ſo fond of, with whom by the bye you might have had plenty of poor relations vithout leather-aprons, I have no particular deſire for your having Sir Iſaac; but then you muſt get rid of him yourſelf, for your papa and I have promiſed to prevail upon you to have him; but if you von't, you know——

Miſs Clay. O, Madam, if that is all, I ſhall very ſoon be able to get rid of him, without troubling you ladyſhip or my father for any thing but your permiſſion to refuſe ever liſtening to him again.

Sir Iſaac juſt at that inſtant calling under the window, to know if the ladies would not take a little walk before they went to dreſs, put an end to the converſation: the concluſion of which gave the moſt ſenſible pleaſure to Miſs Clayton and her friend.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A Walk. A fair Riddance.

THE ſun happening to ſhine remarkably warm for the ſeaſon, the ladies condeſcended to take a walk with Sir Iſaac, as far as the end of the avenue; but the incendiary Stapleton had, by this time, ſo effectually done her buſineſs with the whole family, that even Lady Clayton could hardly bring herſelf to behave tolerably civil to him. During the walk, therefore, the ſeemingly ſtudied neglect with which they all treated him, would have piqued a leſs proud man than Sir Iſaac. They tittered, they whiſpered, they talked French, they winked, they nodded, and, in ſhort, behaved with ſo much indifference, not to ſay rudeneſs, that he muſt have had leſs penetration than even he had, not to have ſeen that it was all premeditated, and that the whole family was in a league againſt him. By the time they got to the end of the avenue, which extended near a mile from the houſe, Sir Harry was returning from his viſit. As ſoon as he ſaw them, he got out of the chariot and joined them.

Sir Iſaac having made ſeveral unſucceſsful efforts to join in the converſation, and having hazarded ſeveral ingenious remarks upon the country, the weather, and the wind, without being ſo fortunate as to procure one anſwer, had that moment taken a reſolution to ſhut his luckleſs mouth for the remainder of the walk; but the arrival of Sir Harry, whoſe habitual politeneſs generally got the better of his diſguſts, prevented his putting it in practice.—To behave with equal politeneſs to thoſe he eſteems and thoſe he deſpiſes, is the part which a courtier ſpends his youth in learning, and all the reſt of his life in performing. Sir Harry had long been maſter of his part, and when the firſt guſt of paſſion or reſentment was over, performed it to admiration. Overnight, he had been thoroughly provoked at the inſolence of Sir Iſaac, who, knowing his own obſcurity, ſhould have the preſumption to think of introducing himſelf into his family; and for a few hours his indignation threw him off his guard, and his real character got the better of his aſſumed one. But in his way to Lord L.'s, he had had time to recollect himſelf, and having had an opportunity whilſt he was there of obſerving the extreme complaiſance with which his lordſhip treated a perſon who happened to be with him, for whom

whom Sir Harry knew he had the moſt abſolute contempt, he preſently recovered his cue, and, by the time he joined the company at his return, was prepared to go on with his part, with that true ſpirit of which his patron Lord L. had juſt given him a pattern; which conſiſts in borrowing the language of friendſhip and affection, without troubling one's ſelf with any other part of them, and by that means appearing outwardly what one ſhould be within. This is an *etiquette*, without which a man cannot paſs in the world, and which is for leading men who have but little knowledge of the world into miſtakes.

"My dear Sir Iſaac," ſaid Sir Harry, "Lord L. was extremely ſorry you would "not do him the honour to call upon him; "he would have been very happy to have ſeen "you, and I ſhould have been no leſs ſo, in "introducing you to him."—His name had never once been mentioned, indeed it would have coſt Sir Harry a bluſh, if he had imagined his lordſhip could ſuſpect he had the ſon of a ticket-porter in his houſe; but it was a civil thing, and ſo he ſaid it. Sir Iſaac, who was a matter-of-fact man, who never told a lie himſelf, but when there was ſomething to be got by it, and had but very little knowledge of the refinements of good breeding,

breeding, his own breeding extending not an inch farther than civility, and ſometimes falling ſhort even of that, was a little ſurprized at Sir Harry's cordiality, for he had been thoroughly convinced over-night, that he was well inclined to quarrel with him: not being, therefore, in the court-ſecret, he took all this civility for genuine friendſhip, and concluded he had been miſtaken. His countenance cleared up in an inſtant, and giving a ſide glance at Miſs Clayton, as much as to ſay, "I'll tell your papa of you, Miſs," he put his arm within Sir Harry's, and, enquiring what news he brought from Lord L.'s, they proceeded towards the houſe with the greateſt cordiality imaginable. When they got into the garden, the ladies went in to dreſs, and the gentlemen took a turn or two upon the bowling green before the door. Then it was that Sir Iſaac began to open his mind, and to make his complaint to Sir Harry of the ill-uſage he had received from his wife and daughter, not without many ſevere reflections upon the meddling diſpoſition of Mrs. Stapleton, to whom he was not ſuch a fool but he could eaſily perceive he was indebted for the great change in the behaviour of Lady Clayton, (for, to ſay the truth, Miſs Clayton had long before uſed him as ill as ſhe knew how to do) within

in the ſhort time elapſed ſince her arrival. He fully expected that Sir Harry would, at leaſt, be extremely ſhocked, and ſorry, promiſe to ſet matters upon the beſt footing he could, and, whatever he might be able to do with regard to his lady, would engage at leaſt that his daughter ſhould behave with more reſpect to him. According, indeed, to his notions of Sir Harry's ſentiments in his favour, he had a right to expect all this favour; he had a right to expect all this, if not more: he was therefore not a little ſurpriſed to find him hum! and ha! and, in ſhort, heſitate a long time before he gave him an anſwer at all. Little did he ſuſpect that Sir Harry was all this time endeavouring to reconcile his ſincerity to his breeding, and ſtudying how to turn him out of his houſe in the civilleſt manner. It was not to be done very civilly, ſo he was forced for once to lay his good-breeding a little on one ſide, which he was very loth to do; but the idea of his father's knot, and white apron, happening to come acroſs him juſt at that inſtant, enabled him to tell him at length, "that he was very ſorry if any thing in his houſe "had given him offence, but if that was the "caſe, he knew how to go where he ſhould "be more agreeably entertained."—You have ſeen, reader——But what ſignifies what you have

have ſeen? Sir Iſaac's aſtoniſhment was like nothing you ever could ſee. It was that kind of dumb-founding aſtoniſhment which makes a man examine, in ſilence, his aſtoniſher from top to toe; then turn his head firſt on this ſide, then on that, as if looking for ſomebody to help him to wonder. Sir Harry had now pretty well got over his ſcruples; ſo taking advantage of the ſilence into which he had aſtoniſhed Sir Iſaac, he proceeded. "Look'ye, "Sir Iſaac," ſaid he, "I ſhould be very ſorry "to behave ill to any *gentleman*," (he laid a particular emphaſis on that word) "under "my own roof; but it is the firſt time "the breeding of my family" (the blood of the Claytons began to riſe) "was "ever called in queſtion. If Miſs Clay-"ton has any diſlike to you, I make no "doubt but ſhe has her reaſons: poſſibly "I may have my own for not enter-"taining ſo good opinion of you as I "once did: Lady Clayton may have the "ſame."

"Sir—Sir!" ſpluttered Sir Iſaac, "I "beg—I deſire you would explain your-"ſelf. Sir, I know how to treat any body "who calls my character in queſtion."

Sir Harry was a very peaceable man.—"I want not, Sir Iſaac," ſaid he, "to "quarrel

" quarrel with you, or any man: I once, per-
" haps, thought an alliance with you
" might have been an eligible thing, and
" wiſhed, I acknowledge, to perſuade my
" daughter to think ſo too; but, Sir,
" ſhe is not to be prevailed on; you ſee
" you cannot prevail on her yourſelf;
" nor can I: let us therefore part friends,
" as we met, and may you find a fami-
" ly more proper for your alliance than
" mine is." " With all my heart, Sir,"
cried Sir Iſaac. " Hoh! with all my
" heart; but—Sam!——but may I be—
" Sam!—may I be—get my chaiſe di-
" rectly—be d—ned." " Don't be warm,
" Sir Iſaac," ſaid Sir Harry mildly,—" nor
" in a hurry; let us dine together, and
" part civilly, however." " Rot me if I do
" though," cried he; and in ſpite of all that
Sir Harry could ſay, he hurried up to his
room, and never ceaſed curſing his ſervants,
the whole family and himſelf, till he had
got his wardrobe tumbled into his chaiſe-
feat, and then flinging himſelf into one
corner of the chaiſe, without taking the
leaſt notice of any one of the family, he
drove off, never more to appear at Beech-
wood-Park. The ladies, who had the
curioſity to liſten to the whole proceeding,
were

were highly delighted with the event; and Mrs. Stapleton ſat down to write an account of the whole proceeding to Sir Charles Beville.

As, therefore, reader, it is high time for us to be travelling that way, if you pleaſe we will carry the letter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Various Remarks on Viſiting, and other Matters.

——"I NEVER call upon any body in my "ride," ſaid Mr. Norris. "I "know nothing upon earth ſo inſipidly impertinent as that kind of call:—generally "ſpeaking, a viſiter in that way neither entertains the perſon he calls on, nor ſuffers "him to entertain himſelf.

"I frequently am favoured with a call by "one or other of my neighbours; as ſoon as "he comes in, I ſhut up my book, or lay "down my pen; he ſits down, I twiſt my "thumbs, and he tells me ſomething of the "weather, which leads us into telling each "other forty things, which we both knew "before, and which it did not ſignify a farthing whether either of us ever knew; "aſking forty queſtions, without caring a "pin for the anſwers, and abuſing forty folks "for things which we know nothing about.

"In this way he murders my whole morning, and becauſe he has nothing to do, is "deter-

"determined I ſhall not do any thing."
"Poſſibly," ſaid young Barker, "your
"neighbours think you are an idle man
"without any buſineſs, and ſo come to amuſe
"you, for fear your time ſhould hang heavy
"upon your hands." "That," cried old
Mr. Barker, "is one of the greateſt miſ-
"takes that can be; to imagine, that be-
"cauſe a man has none of thoſe matters upon
"his hands, which the world pleaſes to call
"buſineſs, that therefore he muſt be an idle
"man. It requires ſo great a fund of know-
"ledge to be able to fill up one's time with-
"out the affairs of the world, that I think
"the employments of the ſtudious ought to
"have a better name; and that reading, writ-
"ing, and thinking, have juſt as good a right
"to be called buſineſs, as caſting up accounts,
"and engroſſing title-deeds."

"Very true," ſaid Norris, "and I don't ſee
"why I am to be broken in upon in the
"middle of an intereſting page, and be hur-
"ried out of the pleaſing enthuſiaſm, the
"ſentimental deluſion, in which I am in-
"dulging my mind, into the inſipid obſer-
"vations upon wind and weather, with
"which an impertinent viſiter pleaſes to en-
"tertain me, any more than I ſhould be in-
"terrupted in drawing up a brief, or making

" a bargain." " Poſſibly then," ſaid Mrs. Barker, " you are an advocate for the " London cuſtom, of denying one's ſelf." " Why," replied he, " in general, I hate a " lie as bad as treaſon; but, as nobody in- " tends to be believed, or to mean any " thing more than that they are engaged, " or not at leiſure, it becomes no lie, and " therefore, as it is no ſin, and very con- " venient, I wiſh the cuſtom was adopted in " the country. In ſhort, London, is the " land in which it is pretty generally true, " that whoever has no buſineſs, is an idle " perſon, and of courſe, it is the land of vi- " ſits; and with all my heart: if you can be " contented to go out in the evening with no " other view, but to return at night, per- " fectly ſatisfied with having in four or five " hours tired a pair of coach-horſes, wetted " two ſervants to the ſkin, ſeen ten or twelve " footmen, one lady whom you hardly know " by ſight, and another whom you don't care " ſix-pence whether you ever ſeen again, and " then think you lead a life of pleaſure, why " I am very well ſatisfied too; only I don't " love pleaſure." " I fancy, Mrs. Barker," ſaid Sir Charles, " you think Norris a very " unſociable man." " I don't know that," replied ſhe; " people who like any ſociety " better than none, are, in general, thoſe

" who

" who know leaſt how to enjoy it."
" There is no man," ſaid Norris, " loves
" ſociety more than I do; but then let
" it be ſociety. Let me enjoy a family
" fire-ſide, a party of friends connected
" with one another by the ſame purſuits
" and enjoyments; or, if that cannot al-
" ways be the caſe, let us meet however
" to do ſomething more than talk of the
" weather: let the object be what it will,
" muſic, cards, dancing, puſh-pin if you
" will, only let there be an object, if it
" be only to keep us from ſaying the
" ſame thing over again." " And ſo,"
ſaid Sir Charles, " if you cannot always
" have the kind of ſociety you chooſe,
" you will ſhut yourſelf up in your ſtudy
" by yourſelf from one year's end to the
" other?"

" Why, troth," replied Norris, " for a
" man of a ſocial turn of mind, as I
" tell you, and you know I am, that is
" a bad expedient, and indeed what I am
" very near ſick of, for which reaſon, if I
" could meet with a woman who came
" within a bar's length of my way of
" thinking, I would not ſtand for trifles;
" I ſhould certainly marry, and form a *cote-*
" *rie* for myſelf."

"I do really think," ſaid Sir Charles, "that of all the women I ever ſaw, the "lady I have picked out for you comes "the neareſt to the mark." "I am glad "of it, with, all my heart," cried Norris, "becauſe then I am in love with her al-"ready; which otherwiſe would have been "a difficult matter to have brought "about."

"Are you difficult to pleaſe?" ſaid Mrs. Barker. "No, Madam," replied he, "but "I have been in love without marrying, "and therefore I took it for granted, I ſhould "marry without being in love; but Sir "Charles ſays not." "I'll ſhew you a "letter," ſaid Sir Charles, "which I have "this minute received from her, and if "you are not in love with her then, you "are a ſtock or a ſtone."

He accordingly gave him the letter which he had received from Mrs. Stapleton, which was written with all that life and ſpirit which were natural to her, and had a certain mixture of thoſe ſenſible remarks which ſpeak obſervation and diſcernment. He read the letter with the moſt exquiſite delight. "O," cried he, "how charming it is to "find, in the ſame perſon, the charms of "a woman mixed with the ſenſe and in-

"genuity

" genuity of a man! She has all the merit
" of both ſexes."

" I thought," ſaid Mrs. Barker, " you
" great ſcholars had deſpiſed a learned
" lady?" " I don't know," replied Norris,
" what great ſcholars may do; I am ſure I
" do not. I care not how much a woman
" knows, only let her not pretend to know
" more than ſhe does. I never heard of any
" law which reſtrained ladies from making
" uſe of their eyes, from reading, or
" remembering what they read. If a woman
" has a good underſtanding, ſhe will be able
" to improve it, or, if you will, become
" learned; if ſhe has not, ſhe never can ac-
" quire any learning: ſhe may affect to ap-
" pear learned indeed, and then ſhe will be-
" come juſtly ridiculous. But I will engage
" for Mrs. Stapleton's knowing too much,
" to affect more knowledge than ſhe really
" has; and I can ſee by this letter, that ſhe
" never ſays ſo much upon a ſubject, but
" ſhe could ſay a great deal more if ſhe
" pleaſed." " I have a great mind, Norris,"
ſaid Sir Charles, " to make you anſwer that
" letter; you find ſhe mentions you in two
" or three places of it, and ſuppoſes that you
" will ſee it: therefore, as you are ſo well
" acquainted with each other by hearſay, I

"have an inclination to ſet you together."
"With all my heart," ſaid Norris: "I would
"not deſire any better amuſement whilſt you
"good folks are gone to dreſs."

Accordingly he went into the library, and when they met in the drawing-room again before dinner, produced the letter which the reader will find in the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Mr. Norris's Letter. The Reader is introduced into good Company.

NEVER, Madam, did any man's curioſity triumph over his diſcretion, as mine has this inſtant done.

Sir Charles, vain wretch that he is, could not conceal his being honoured with a letter from you; I, indiſcreet wretch that I am, could not ſuppreſs my deſire to ſee it. Who, that has heard as much of you as I have, could? On one condition I was to be indulged; name it, cried I, ſeizing the letter, and reading it with the eagerneſs it deſerved. Anſwer it, ſaid he. My hair ſtood an end; but what could I do? I had paſſed my word, ſo he is accountable for all the impertinence of this.—Neither is this the only inſtance I fear, Madam, in which I ſhall ſuffer for my curioſity. I never had leſs inclination for falling in love than at this inſtant; but really your letter is a very diſtreſſing circumſtance. I have long ſaid that I would ſurrender at diſcretion, whenever I found a lady who was ca-

pable of thinking, talking, or writing in ſuch a manner as ſhould correſpond with a certain idea which I had formed in my mind: alas! your letter muſt have been, however you came by it, written from that copy. I have nothing therefore, Madam, to do, but to make you an offer of my heart, whenever you are ready to receive it. All my comfort is, that poſſibly you may not be at leiſure to be loved juſt now; you may probably be ſo taken up with a croud of other adorers, that my affections may find ſome more convenient time of offering themſelves to your ſervice. I ſhall therefore keep my heart, if I can, till you may have occaſion for it: perhaps, ſome time or other, you may have occaſion to make ſome haughty lover jealous, by the appearance of a new ſlave never heard of before; or may have an inclination to out-number ſome young beauty juſt come out, and may have occaſion for me to ſwell your train: whenever any thing of this kind happens, be ſo good as remember you have a lover in reſerve, who only waits for your ſignal to begin loving you, juſt as violently as you ſhall think proper to command him. Sir Charles, heaven be praiſed, propoſes ſetting out for London next week, by which time you, Madam, will probably be arrived, and I ſhall have the happi-

neſs

neſs of ſeeing to whom I have promiſed to pay ſuit and ſervice.

I know not whether I have done well thus to declare myſelf your lover before-hand; for, according to the cuſtom of the ladies, it will poſſibly deprive me of thoſe little marks of attention and favour, which a lady beſtows on every man but a lover. Nay, I am not ſure whether you may not think treating me ill, the beſt ſignal you can give me for beginning to love you, as the world always take it for granted, when they ſee a lady uſe a man worſe than ordinary, that he has ventured to declare he loves her, and ſo put himſelf in her power. But permit me to give you one hint; though uſing me a little ill, may be only an indication to the world that I have the honour to love you, it is poſſible for you to uſe me ſo very ill, as to make them believe that you do me the honour to love me. As therefore that is a ſecret which I ſhould think you would not chooſe to truſt the world with, I have the greateſt dependance, both upon your generoſity and diſcretion, that you will not make too rigid a uſe of the advantage I have given you over me, by aſſuring you that I have the honour to be,

Madam,

Your moſt ſincere admirer,

T. NORRIS.

"Not a word, Sir Charles, will I ſay for "you indeed. Write for yourſelf, if you "pleaſe."

Mr. Norris had ſcarcely finiſhed reading his letter, before Lord Timon, who was engaged to dine with Sir Charles that day, arrived; accompanied by his only daughter, a fine girl of about fourteen, his chaplain, a led captain, and two large ſpaniels; which, together with Mr. Poundem, who dropped in by chance, made up a good country party; and Mr. Norris's remarks upon converſation were remembered more than once, during the courſe of the day.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

More Remarks on Converſation. A Hint or two concerning an Order of Men called Jolly-Fellows.

——NO; it is impoſſible.—I have endeavoured, reader, to give you ſome account of the converſation which paſſed amongſt all the good company to which I introduced you in the laſt chapter; but though I cannot ſay that they were ever long ſilent, I nevertheleſs find it impoſſible to retail any of their converſation. All I can recollect is, that one part, and that no ſmall one, of the afternoon was taken up in a diſpute between the chaplain and the apothecary, about the proper length of a gun-barrel for cock-ſhooting; which, if his lordſhip had not acted the part of a moderator between them, would have ended in a downright quarrel. For as each grounded his arguments, not upon his own ſtrength, but upon the ſuppoſed weakneſs of his antagoniſt; the parſon aſſerting that an apothecary could know nothing of ſhooting, and the

apothecary as warmly inſiſting that a parſon ought not; every reply tended to exaſperate them more and more againſt each other, without bringing the matter in queſtion at all nearer to a deciſion. At length my lord interpoſed, and ſettled the affair, according to cuſtom, by a bet. This was the only part of the day in which the majority of the company were not talking at the ſame time; and, of courſe, this part of the converſation was the only one which was intelligible enough to be remembered. Poſſibly, reader, you may think this might as well have been forgot; but, if you live in the country, and make a point of forgetting all converſation upon ſubjects of no more conſequence than the length of a gun-barrel, you will very ſoon have but little uſe for your memory. The caſe was rather altered when they left the bottle and retired to coffee and the ladies. The chaplain and the captain, who had hitherto been the loudeſt and the faſteſt talkers, except Mr. Poundem, who was a match for them both, were now the moſt ſilent part of the company. The company of women in general throws an air of order and decorum into the converſation, which effectually ſtops the mouth of what is called a jolly-fellow; and of courſe it is a favourite maxim with all jolly-fellows, that

that the two worſt half hours in a day, are the half hour before dinner, and the half hour which the ladies uſually ſtay after the cloth is removed. And poſſibly the empire of modeſty has no greater triumph than this involuntary tribute, which this moſt lawleſs order of men pay to it. To inſpire the thinking part of mankind with veneration and reſpect, is a ſmall matter; but to be able to ſtop that torrent of noiſe and ribaldry, which overwhelms all other conſiderations, is ſomething to boaſt of. There is not perhaps, in nature, ſo dull an animal as a jolly-fellow. I hope, reader, thou art not of the ſpecies; indeed I need not much fear it; your jolly-fellow never reads. Thinking and reading he leaves to the ſtupid part of mankind, who have no ſpirit: a man of ſpirit ſhould do nothing but drink and ſing and holla!—till he can neither holla, drink nor ſing. His aim is to be very merry, therefore he is very noiſy; and becauſe ſaying any thing which might excite a laugh would require ſome degree of thought, he chooſes the laugh without the joke, which is leaſt trouble: or elſe he ſubſtitutes ſomething by way of joke, ſome ſpecimen of practical wit, as throwing a bottle at a looking-glaſs, burning his own or his neighbour's wig, pinning your coat to the wainſcot with a red-hot

poker, ſwallowing half a pint of brandy and gun-powder, and giving a view holla after it, or ſome ſuch matter which requires more activity of body than mind, and which the ſociety of jolly-fellows have acknowledged, time out of mind, to be ſuper-excellent jokes, and applaud accordingly. I know a man at this time, the delight of the whole order of Bucks, who never mention his name without the higheſt encomiums on his wit and humour; and, by way of proof, tell you, that he once nailed a tavern-waiter to the table, by ſtriking a fork through his ear, and drank a bottle of claret ſitting behind the man upon the black-horſe at Charing-Croſs. This is the kind of men whom the company of ladies effectually ſilences; they cannot ſo far conquer all ſenſe of breeding, as to holla before them; and they have nothing to ſay but, "Dammee, drink;" ſo what can they do? The chaplain and the captain might be ſaid to ſtand very high in the rank of jolly-fellows; which indeed was the footing upon which they were entertained at Lord Timon's: for though his lordſhip was not himſelf a very jolly-fellow, as he had, nevertheleſs, a large election intereſt to keep up in the county, it was very neceſſary for him to have ſuch people about him. Accordingly, whenever the company were too ſerious, the

parſon

parſon was called upon for a good ſong, which with the help of a baſſoon, made of the hearth broom, by way of ſymphony, imitating an old woman, or a knife-grinder's wheel, or the rumbling of a wheel-barrow, or a tabor and pipe, or ſome ſuch ingenious plagiariſm from Shuter and Skeggs, ſeldom failed to enliven them, and produce a loud laugh, which it was the buſineſs of the captain to conclude with a view holla, and ſee that every man filled a bumper.

Naturaliſts have obſerved, with what truth I will not pretend to determine, that even the moſt noxious animal in nature is not without its uſe. In the ſame manner I think myſelf bound to acknowledge, that ſome uſe may be made even of ſuch an animal as your jolly-fellow. Indeed the uſe which may be made of them in election matters is very aſtoniſhing. Adepts in this ſcience have long found, that, next to the weightieſt of all arguments, there is nothing wins the heart of a freeholder ſo ſoon as mirth and drink: nay, even they whoſe conſcience or pride would make them look ſour at a bribe, have not been proof againſt the enticing allurements of a jolly-fellow. As long therefore as electioneering continues to be the madneſs of the times, and candidates and great men find it as eaſy, and at leaſt as

cheap,

cheap, to ſing and holla people out of their votes, as to gain them by more direct means, I don't know any character which bids fairer for being in general repute than your ſtaunch jolly-fellow: but as this uſe, barring accidents, occurs but once in ſeven years, it is I think great pity that they cannot be laid up in ſome place of ſafety for the other ſix, like militia arms for eleven months out of the twelve, to prevent their doing any miſchief. There would, to be ſure, be a horrid craſh, upon their being all let looſe; but then, as one ſhould have fair warning, one might take that opportunity of going to Paris or Rome to be out of harm's way. If a man will ſtand near the militia, when they are firſt permitted to fire, it is his own fault if he gets a miſchief: and indeed, if one takes notice of the diſtreſs a jolly-fellow is in, when he is not in uſe, one ſhall be convinced, that ſhutting him up would be doing him a kindneſs; he does not know what to do, nor what to ſay, nor where to put his hands.

In this ſituation were the chaplain and the captain in Sir Charles's drawing room. The captain, with his hands in his waiſtcoat pockets, ſtood looking out of the window, with his mouth drawn up in the attitude of whiſtling. Fortunately for the

chaplain, one of my lord's ſpaniels had found her way into the room; ſo he pulled her ears, patted her head, and ſaid, "Poor ducheſs, poor ducheſs."

The reſt of the company wanted not entertainment, for Mrs. Barker had ſat down to the harpſichord, and was accompanying Lady Mary to a ſong.

Every body ſaid handſome things of her ſinging. Lord Timon ſaid many civil things to Mrs. Barker, and wiſhed his daughter could be ſo happy as to have opportunities of improving under her inſtructions.

"Ah, Mr. Poundem," ſaid Lady Mary, "if your ſtory had been true, this lady "and I might have been better ac-"quainted."

Poor Poundem was a good deal confounded, and finding the laugh beginning to riſe againſt him, he pretended immediate buſineſs, and got off as faſt as he could.

The company took their leave ſoon after, and Lady Mary was grown ſo fond of Mrs. Barker, that ſhe would make her promiſe to paſs a few days with her before ſhe left the country. My lord, who was a widower, and whoſe heart was won by any body who paid the leaſt attention

tention to his daughter, prevailed upon Sir Charles and the gentlemen not to divide the party, and the day but one following, was fixed for their visit.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Party viſit Lord Timon. Return and ſet out for London.

AN unhappy difference in election intereſt, which had ſubſiſted between Lord Timon and the late Sir George Beville, had made his lordſhip and Sir Charles almoſt ſtrangers to each other. But Sir Charles was by no means inclined to keep it up, as he was a very moderate man in all affairs of that kind, and moreover was not ſo violently attached to the country-intereſt as his father had been: he was therefore very glad of this opportunity of improving his acquaintance with his lordſhip, and of viſiting upon a leſs formal footing; eſpecially as the young Lady Mary, who was juſt coming into the world, manifeſted a diſpoſition ſo peculiarly amiable and engaging, that he could not help reflecting with pleaſure upon the hopes he had of forming an intimacy between her and a perſon whoſe mind he thought ſeemed caſt in the ſame mould. He ſpent therefore two or three days at Lord Timon's with great ſatisfaction; and the rather,

as the chaplain and the captain were gone upon a cock-ſhooting party for a week into the adjoining county; which greatly added to the pleaſure of the whole party, except old Mr. Barker, who, as his whole amuſement lay in exploring new and uncommon characters, was a good deal diſappointed. The firſt day, at dinner, he could not help obſerving upon calling for a bumper of ſtrong beer, "Ay, if "my friend the chaplain was here, I ſhould "not be obliged to drink by myſelf, I dare "ſay."

The company ſmiled. "My chaplain," ſaid his lordſhip, who ſeemed to think the remark was not entirely to his advantage, "is "a very good-natured man; and though he has "his foible, he is never abſent, that I don't "miſs him. Poſſibly I may ſay, as Prince "Hal does by Falſtaff, I could better "ſpare a better man: however, he is a very "honeſt fellow, and I only wiſh he was any "thing rather than a clergyman." "The "clergy, my Lord," replied Norris, "are "but men, and liable to the ſame diſpoſitions "and the ſame failings as other men are. It "is therefore, I think, a great pity that ſome "expedient cannot be found out to prevent "people from going into orders, till a time of "life when their natural diſpoſition may be

"ſup-

" ſuppoſed to be ſeen, or at leaſt till the
" choice of their profeſſion may be the act of
" their own reaſon, rather than the inclina-
" tion of their parents; becauſe, in that caſe,
" the ſame reaſon which leads them to chooſe
" a grave profeſſion, will diſpoſe them to be-
" have with decency in it. There is no ſay-
" ing how a young man of two-and-twenty
" will turn out: it is juſt the age for allow-
" ances, and unfortunately neither the pro-
" feſſion itſelf, nor the idea the world have
" of it, will bear to make any." " But
" then, Mr. Norris," ſaid his lordſhip, " if
" you keep a man till thirty years of age, be-
" fore you determine upon the method by
" which he is to earn his bread, he runs a
" great riſque of having, at forty, no bread
" to eat; to ſay nothing of how he is to be
" maintained in the mean time."

" It is very true, my Lord," ſaid Sir Charles,
" and therefore I am afraid the evil we com-
" plain of lies too deep for redreſs; for it
" ſeems neceſſarily connected with the union
" which ſubſiſts between the civil and religi-
" ous eſtabliſhments. As long as the admi-
" niſtration of religious ordinances muſt be
" attended with certain emoluments, upon
" which the profeſſors are to ſubſiſt, they, as
" well as the profeſſors of any other art or

" ſci-

"ſcience, muſt enter upon their occupation "at the time of life when it becomes neceſ- "ſary for them to provide for themſelves; and "have therefore the ſame chance of turning "out unfit for their buſineſs, as they would "have had in any other occupation; and in "that caſe, as there is unfortunately no time "allowed for probation, the intereſt and cre- "dit of the profeſſion muſt give way to the "neceſſity of the trade." "The eſtabliſh- "ing," ſaid Norris, "that ſtate of proba- "tion you mention, might afford ſome relief "in this caſe; I mean, if more encourage- "ment, or at leaſt leſs diſcouragement, was "given to thoſe young people, who, after "having been a year or two in orders, and "finding themſelves unfit for the taſk they "have undertaken, are willing to quit "both the emoluments attending it, and "betake themſelves to ſome other means "for a livelihood. Indeed it was origi- "nally intended by the church, that the "order of deacons ſhould be, as it were, "in a ſtate of probation; and if this was "the cuſtom, the church would be rid of "many unworthy ſervants, who might be "made uſeful members of the community in "any other occupation: but at preſent, "there is ſuch a ſtigma affixed to the notion

"of

" of quitting this profeſſion, after having " once engaged in it, that the man who is " bold enough to venture it, is generally " looked upon as an abandoned profligate, " and ſeldom has much countenance ſhewn " him afterwards." " But," ſaid old Mr. Barker, " do you clergy hold that to be or- " thodox? have not you a canon againſt it? " and don't you quote ſome text of ſcripture " to prove it unlawful? *He that hath ſet his* " *hand to the plough, and looketh back*——" " With regard to our canons," replied Norris, " they are a mere *brutum fulmen*; we " have one againſt wearing white ſtockings " and wrought night-caps; but with regard " to the texts of ſcripture, whatever people " of more ingenuity than judgment may " pretend to have diſcovered, I acknowledge, " taking the eſtabliſhment of the church of " England in the ſtate it is now in, I can- " not find one that is againſt the practice in " queſtion. Hypothetical men may indeed " find ſome detached ſentence in ſome part or " other of the Bible, which they may inter- " pret as a ſupport to almoſt any opinion " whatever; and in that way the text you " mention has been thought to declare againſt " thoſe who quit the ſacerdotal office: but, " in my opinion, it has not the leaſt to do

" with

" with it, but related wholly to the embra-
" cing the tenets of the Chriſtian religion, and
" returning afterwards to the errors of Juda-
" iſm or Paganiſm." " So," ſaid my lord,
" you really, Mr. Norris, ſee no reaſon why
" my chaplain ſhould not lay aſide his gown
" to-morrow, if he likes it?" " So far from
" it, my Lord," replied he, " that I am clearly
" of opinion he would, by putting on his
" brown coat, do more good to himſelf, in
" proportion as he would do leſs harm
" to every one elſe within reach of
" his example, than by keeping on his
" black one." " But why," ſaid Lady
Mary, bluſhing as ſhe ſpoke, " ſhould any
" gentleman behave ſo in a brown coat, as he
" ſhould be aſhamed to do it in a black one?"
" If a man, my dear Lady Mary," ſaid
Norris, " had one fiftieth part of your good-
" neſs and ſimplicity, he might even wear
" what coat he pleaſed." " Well ſaid my
" little preacher," ſaid his lordſhip. " Do
" you know, Mr. Norris, that there is no-
" body in this houſe that the chaplain is
" afraid of but Mary?" " I don't wonder
" at it, my Lord," ſaid Norris, " in the leaſt:
" for, to a perſon who is not ſcrupulouſly
" nice in the performance of his duty, the
" moſt innocent perſon will be always the

" moſt

" moſt formidable. I have obſerved that " there are few people ſo abandoned as not " to expreſs themſelves with ſome degree of " caution before children: they tell you it " is for fear of corrupting them; but I am " convinced it ariſes, in a great meaſure, from " a fear of expoſing themſelves: there is a " conſciouſneſs of inferiority annexed to " guilt, when it is contraſted with perfect " innocence; for which reaſon, nothing is " ſo cutting as the rebuke of a child. A " friend of mine," continued he, " had con- " tracted a habit of ſwearing at almoſt every " word he ſpoke. I, and ſeveral of his more " ſerious friends, had often remonſtrated with " him upon the folly and wickedneſs of it, " and got laughed at for our pains. One " day he let fly a tremendous volley before a " ſon of his, a fine ſenſible boy of about " ten years old. When he was cool, the " boy came up to him, Pray, papa, ſays he, " cut off my head. No, you rogue, " ſaid he; what ſhould I cut off your head " for? But why won't you, papa? ſaid " the boy. Why becauſe I love you too well, " replied he. But, papa, ſays the boy, " ſuppoſe I was to teize you every day, and " bring you a knife and provoke you? Why " then, ſaid he, may be ſome day or

" other

"other I ſhould take you at your word. "O papa, ſaid the boy, then I would not "adviſe you to beg God Almighty every day "to damn you ſo as you do, for if you pro-"voke him, may be, ſome day or other, he'll "take you at your word. My friend was "ſtruck, and the child's rebuke effected what "all our arguments could not: from that day "to this, I never heard him ſwear an oath." My lord thanked Mr. Norris for his ſtory. "I am," ſaid he, with a frankneſs which very well became him, "a little too much "addicted to that fooliſh cuſtom myſelf, eſ-"pecially when I am warm; but for the fu-"ture I promiſe you, Mr. Norris, I ſhall "think of your friend and his boy." "And "I promiſe you, Mr. Norris," ſaid Lady Ma-ry, "that whenever my lord is angry, I will "not forget to bring him a large knife."

The two families ſeemed ſo greatly pleaſed with each other, that they all wiſhed Sir Charles had not fixed his day for returning to London. But as his affairs were in a tickliſh ſituation, he did not think it prudent to defer getting to town by the time he thought Sir Harry Clayton's family would be arrived. "However," ſaid my lord, "we ſhall not "be long after you." Lady Mary ſeemed really ſorry to part with Mrs. Barker, and

Mr.

Mr. Norris, to whom ſhe was grown very partial: Sir Charles therefore could not help whiſpering her, that he hoped before the ſummer to introduce another lady to the honour of her acquaintance, who, he did not doubt, would be able to prevail on Mrs. Barker to paſs ſome part of every ſummer at the hall, and that then he promiſed himſelf the greateſt ſatisfaction in cultivating an intimacy at the Park. Lady Mary expreſſed her joy, and, promiſing to keep his ſecret, took an affectionate leave of Mrs. Barker, whom ſhe promiſed to ſee as ſoon as ever ſhe came to town; and the next morning Sir Charles and all his company ſet out for London.

END *of the* FIFTH BOOK.

BOOK VI.

CHAP. I.

A ſmall Hint to the Court of Criticiſm. The Deſign of theſe Memoirs; what they were intended to contain, and what not.

I HAVE now, reader, brought you to the laſt book of theſe Memoirs; which it may poſſibly give you more pleaſure to hear than me to tell. An author is not ſo ſoon weary of his taſk as a reader may probably be of his; ſelf-approbation keeps the one awake, whilſt there may be little perhaps, but

the ſpirit of criticiſm, to keep the other. With regard to that, if any reader ſhall think it worth his while to criticiſe a work of this nature, he has my free leave and thanks; all I bargain for is, that no critic nor ſociety of critics ſhall preſume to pull to pieces both the author and his book, without knowing the one, or reading the other: a method of proceeding which, though it may be very eaſy and convenient for thoſe who are obliged to criticiſe ſo many books, in ſo many days, is not however altogether ſo fair; and which is I believe in practice no where, but in the ſupreme court of criticiſm eſtabliſhed, by way of *monthly* tribunal, in this metropolis. In this court indeed, I am told, the profeſſors of criticiſm are arrived to a degree of perfection in the art, quite unknown to, and, I dare ſay, unthought of by Ariſtotle or Longinus, Horace or Quintillian, Dacier or Boileau, Pope or Addiſon. The critics of their days, by frequent reading and maturely conſidering the authors they criticiſed, arrived at length to a true knowledge of their beauties, and their defects, pointing out the former with taſte, and the latter with candour: but it was reſerved for the critics of our own times to ſee the whole of an author's deſign by his title-page, diſcover all his failings by his table of con-

contents, and whip up a pert, declamatory abuſe of the whole from the ten firſt pages.

I know not, reader, what opinion you may entertain of the work before you, now you begin to come within ſight of the concluſion. If it has given you any amuſement, I am afraid I muſt be obliged to acknowledge that it has done all that I ever intended it ſhould. To ſay the truth, I have ſeen ſo many writers, who have ſet out with profeſſing to kill two birds with one ſtone, and to afford their readers both amuſement and inſtruction, but who have taken their aim ſo ill, as really to hit neither the one nor the other, that I determined to endeavour only to amuſe my readers; and if I could do that without making them any worſe, to be very well contented, without aſpiring to the hope of making them much better. I cannot think that men are ſo eaſily reclaimed from vicious habits, as for a ſatire, or even a ſermon, to effect their reformation: the morality in both is read, praiſed, and forgotten. Neither perhaps is the idea of a perfect character, by way of pattern, the propereſt to excite emulation; the diſtance between that and the common run of mankind, is ſo palpable and diſheartening, that it defeats its own purpoſe, and inſtead of exciting emulation, dictates deſpair. I have therefore en-

deavoured to avoid the parade of perfection, which always ſeems attended with ſo much difficulty, as to diſcourage any perſon from endeavouring to attain to it, and have choſen rather to ſhew inſtances of a natural goodneſs of heart, and ſweetneſs of temper, which produce a rectitude of conduct with ſo much eaſe, that the difficulty ſeems to be how to act otherwiſe. The characters which I have choſen to throw an innocent ſort of ridicule upon, are moſtly ſuch as are rather fooliſh than wicked, ſuch as have rather foibles than vices: for, though a good character may not have its effect with regard to improving the mind, a bad one will always act ſtrongly the contrary way. The goodneſs of the one is eaſily forgotten, but the viciouſneſs of the other cleaves to the mind of every reader, and has its effect according to the diſpoſition of him who receives it: if that happens to be good, the picture of vice may carry a degree of diſguſt with it which may prevent its doing him much harm; if it happens to be more inclined to evil, which, without being uncandid, we may, I fear, ſuppoſe is more than an even chance, the vicious images will ſtrengthen that propenſity; and however careful the author may have been in rendering ſtrict poetical juſtice, by making puniſhment the certain

tain effect of criminal indulgence, the ideas of the indulgence will remain upon the mind, long after thoſe of the puniſhment are effaced. I am convinced therefore that the introducing vicious characters either into books of this kind, or upon the ſtage by way of expoſing them to ſhame and ridicule, is a very dangerous experiment, eſpecially for young minds: for as Dean Swift's admirable piece of irony, called "Advice to Servants," was ſaid to have made more bad ſervants than ever it corrected, by teaching them tricks, which, without his wit, they never would have found out; ſo, a ſeries of crimes and follies may give an inſight into vice, which the moral drawn from them may never be able to prevent being put in practice.

Another thing which I have endeavoured to avoid in this little hiſtory, is every thing that tends to the marvelous, or which is indeed at all out of the road of the common occurrences of life. Extraordinary events, and ſurpriſing incidents, happen to ſo few people, that they have, in general, no effect upon the minds of common readers, and ſerve only to fill the heads of young people with romantic notions and wild ideas, which either are never met with in real life, or if they are—the more is the pity. The life of an honeſt man, or even

ſome years of it, tolerably converſant in the world, may afford incidents ſufficient, with the natural remarks upon them, to furniſh amuſing and even inſtructive memoirs, without having recourſe to elopements, kidnappings, duels, diſguiſes, exchanges of children in the cradle, and various other extraordinary matters which are calculated only to make the reader ſtare, and rarely exiſt but in novels.—It is not ſufficient for an author, who draws his materials from nature and experience, that he keeps within the bounds of poſſibility; tranſactions, which happen but once in a century, have little to do in a picture of human life, and can at beſt pleaſe but a few people; whereas the incidents which fall under every one's inſpection, like a rural landſcape, will pleaſe univerſally, from the mere force of nature. Such were my ideas in writing theſe Memoirs; whether they at all correſpond with yours who read them, I cannot pretend to ſay. However that may be, it is high time now to reſume them, and haſten to the concluſion.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Sir Charles arrives in Town. Viſits Mrs. Stapleton, who informs him of what had paſſed at Sir Harry Clayton's, ſince her laſt Account.

WHEN Sir Charles arrived in town, he was very well pleaſed to find two cards which had been left that morning; the one from Mrs. Stapleton, informing him that ſhe was arrived in town with Sir Harry Clayton's family the evening before, and ſhould be glad to ſee him the firſt half hour he had to ſpare; the other from Governor Beville, informing him that he was come to town for a few weeks, and would dine with him that day. He did not defer a moment waiting on Mrs. Stapleton, and, by good fortune, found her at home and alone. "Never," ſaid Sir Charles, "had any man the obligations to a "friend, that I have to you." "I am very "glad you think ſo," replied ſhe, "for I "aſſure you I have worked very hard for you; "but I believe I have ſucceeded at laſt: I

"fancy you may make a viſit in Brook-Street "whenever you pleaſe." "You tranſport "me," cried he. "Have you then prevailed "on Sir Harry to admit my viſits?" "Not "I," replied ſhe: "you don't think, that af-"ter I had been at all that pains to get rid "of your rival, and left poor Harriet with-"out a lover to her back, that I would make "ſo ill an uſe of my power as to beg to have you "admitted to fill up the vacancy?" "Why, "does not Sir Harry expect me then?" cried Sir Charles a little diſconcerted. "Expect "you!" replied ſhe: "No, he is frightened "out of his wits leſt you ſhould not come. "I have given it as my opinion that the treat-"ment he gave you, was ſo very different from "what you had a right to expect, that you "will not return, and what is more, that I "think you ought not: I have promiſed, "however, to uſe my intereſt with you, and "if I can prevail, am, as it were, by acci-"dent, to call there with you to-morrow "morning: but remember, you are not to know "a word of this concerted plan between Sir "Harry and me." Sir Charles's great joy was viſible in his countenance. "I ſee," ſaid ſhe, "you are happy; I ſee you enjoy your "proſpects; but what would I have given, to "have had you overheard all that has paſſed

"on

" on your account! O! if you had but ſeen " with what an affected air of indifference I " talked of your couſin Lord Beville: upon " my word, Sir Charles, you have a great " deal to anſwer for; for I practiſed more de- " ceit upon your account in the laſt week " that I ſtaid in Suffolk, than ever I did up- " on my own in my whole life." " You " could not," ſaid Sir Charles, " have given " me a more convincing proof of your friend- " ſhip, than by acting in a manner to which I " know you have ſo great an averſion, in order to " ſerve me. But what ſaid Sir Harry?" " O," cried ſhe, " he bit at once: Is Sir Charles of " the ſame family with Lord Beville? O yes, " ſaid I, his neareſt relation: if Lord Be- " ville dies without heirs, his title and eſtate " centre in Sir Charles's family. Sir Har- " ry's face grew as long as my arm. Where " is Sir Charles? cried he with a ſigh. At " preſent I believe in Northamptonſhire, ſaid " I, careleſly; probably though going to town " by this time. O Mrs. Stapleton, and ah " Mrs. Stapleton, and a ſhake of the head, " and then another ſigh. I kept intent upon " my knotting; at laſt, with another long " ſigh, out it came; we have been too haſty " in that affair, ſaid he; you, my dear Ma- " dam, have helped us to repair one *faux pas*,

" could not you, could not you give us a little of
" your aſſiſtance towards rectifying another? I
" make no doubt, Sir Harry, ſaid I with a very
" grave look, but Sir Charles was very fond
" of Harriet; and if he had met with a re-
" ception, which from his birth, his fortune,
" and, give me leave to ſay, his perſonal me-
" rit [Sir Charles bowed] he had a right to
" demand; I believe he would have preferred
" your daughter to any perſon in the world,
" and have offered you a *carte blanche:* but I
" don't know; young men of rank and for-
" tune are not ſo plenty in the world; and
" if a man is a little ſenſible that he is worth
" accepting, he does not like to be refuſed.
" Sir Harry fell into one of his brown ſtudies,
" and looked ſo diſappointed, and ſo humble,
" and ſo ſorry, that I could not help having
" ſome compaſſion for him; but I was afraid
" of giving up the point too ſoon, leſt he
" ſhould ſuſpect that I had been in a plot
" againſt him. I cannot but acknowledge, Sir
" Harry, ſaid I, with an affected concern,
" that I was a good deal hurt to ſee you, be-
" fore we left Bath, ſo much attached to
" Lord B. who I knew had no farther inten-
" tion in his attendance upon Harriet, than to
" amuſe himſelf for the time with the prettieſt
" girl in the place: I knew it to be his con-

" ſtant

" ſtant cuſtom, wherever he happened to be,
" to make love, as he calls it, to the fineſt
" woman there; I was therefore ſenſible there
" was nothing to be expected from that quar-
" ter, and even if there had, a man of Lord
" B.'s moderate ſhare of underſtanding, and
" ſmall eſtate, was not likely to have made
" her either very happy in her mind, or eaſy
" in her ſituation; and as to his rank, an
" Iriſh peer, in this peer-making age, is no
" ſuch mighty matter after all. I was there-
" fore very glad when I found you undeceived,
" becauſe, in the firſt place, I was ſorry you
" ſhould indulge yourſelf in the proſpect of
" an affair which I knew was never likely to
" take place, and, in the next, I was in hopes
" you would then have gladly liſtened to the
" propoſals of the only man in the world who
" could in every reſpect make your daughter
" happy. But I cannot ſay how greatly I
" was hurt when I found that you had quitted
" the cauſe of Lord B. only to eſpouſe that of
" ſuch a wretch as Sir Iſaac; and when Sir
" Charles complained to me that he would
" have waited on you in town, but that La-
" dy Clayton, whom he met at the play, in
" a manner forbid him, I own I was really
" very much concerned, and could not blame
" Sir Charles for going out of town, with

" ſome

" ſome reſolutions not much in your favour.
" O don't, do not, my dear Mrs. Stapleton,
" cried he, recapitulate any more inſtances of
" my folly; I have been very, very fooliſh,
" and, for any thing I know, thrown away
" the moſt probable chance of getting a
" peerage into my family, that I may ever
" have as long as I live. But ſurely, ſurely
" your intereſt with Sir Charles might do
" ſomething; I know he has a high opinion
" ——and then he ran on for half an hour
" about my ſenſe and my goodneſs, and all
" that, in order to bring me into temper. At
" laſt I pretended to comply, and to be
" pleaſed with the civil things he ſaid to me;
" may be more than pretended, for a man
" muſt be a fool indeed, if we think him ſo
" at the time he is commending us; however
" that was, I did not much want to be flat-
" tered into a promiſe to try every thing in
" my power to bring you back to your former
" good diſpoſition towards Harriet, and to
" make you forget there ever were ſuch men
" as Lord B. and Sir Iſaac Rupee in the
" world. And now how do you feel your-
" ſelf diſpoſed towards a reconciliation?"
" I never," cried Sir Charles, " was leſs in-
" clined to be obſtinate in my life; forget
" and forgive is the only maxim in the world

" with

" with me juſt now." " Well, you are a " good Chriſtian, I know," replied Mrs. Stapleton, " but I think, if you pleaſe, you " had better not give way too ſoon; what do " you think now of my going by myſelf to- " morrow morning, and telling Sir Harry " that——" " O by no means in the world," interrupted Sir Charles, " the value of a ge- " nerous action depends entirely upon doing " it with a good grace." " Well, well," ſaid ſhe, " don't be frightened, it ſhall ſee its " miſtreſs to-morrow, ſo it ſhall: theſe lo- " vers are ſo impetuous.—O, by the way, " pray what is become of my lover? Why " what a mad-cap muſt you think me, to " imagine I would not be offended at a love- " letter from a man I nver ſaw in my life." " Offended!" cried Sir Charles. " Why I " look upon it to be the greateſt triumph you " ever had in your life. To make a man you " have ſeen fall in love with you is nothing; " every girl with a pair of black eyes in her " head can do that; but to kill at fourſcore " miles diſtance——" " I have a great no- " tion, Sir Charles," ſaid ſhe, " that I ſpy a " ſnake in the graſs here; I verily believe " you intend your friend and I ſhould play at " being in love till we have neither of us a " mind to be in jeſt any longer." " Why," replied

replied he, a little diſtreſſed by the arch gravity of her look, "you have taken a great "deal of pains to help me to a wife, why "ſhould not I take ſome to help you to a "huſband?" "I am exceedingly obliged to "you," replied ſhe, "but I have not at preſent much inclination to marry; but whenever I have, I promiſe you I will ſooner "take a huſband of your recommendation, "than my own chooſing: perhaps too, your "friend may be of the ſame way of thinking; and yet poſſibly neither of us may abſolutely like to buy a pig in a poke." "Why "then," cried Sir Charles, "you have not "ſo good an opinion of my judgment as Norris has; for I am convinced, from "what I have ſaid to him of you, he "would go to church with you to-morrow morning in a domino and maſque, "and never deſire to ſee your face or perſon "till he returned." "I'll be hanged," ſaid ſhe, "if I did not think, from his letter, that "he was a very odd man, and now I am convinced of it." "As to that," ſaid Sir Charles, "you will very ſoon be able to judge; "for I am determined to bring him to pay "his reſpects to you this evening." "Why, "as to that," ſaid ſhe, "to be ſure—any "friend of your's I ſhall be very glad to ſee; "but

" but as to any thing farther——" " Well, " well," cried he, " I cannot ſtay to talk of " that now, for I expect the governor to dine " with me, and it grows late." " O," cried ſhe, " is that magnanimous commander in " town? I beg you would preſent my com- " pliments to him, and let him know that I " hope he will let me have the favour of ſee- " ing him now and then at a private party: " tell him I'll make a half-crown whiſt-table " for him whenever he pleaſes." Sir Charles thanked her for his uncle, and took his leave.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Various Remarks. Sir Charles and Mr. Norris viſit Mrs. Stapleton.

SIR Charles arrived at home juſt as the governor and Mr. Norris had agreed, that if he did not come in a quarter of an hour, they would order up dinner; for as Norris had informed the governor whither he was gone, and they both knew the ſituation his affairs were in, they thought it in vain to wait dinner for a man whoſe mind was ſo much employed upon other matters, that he was likely to be careleſs, not only of dinner time, but whether he had any dinner or not. The governor, with his watch in his hand, met him at the door. Sir Charles expreſſed the real joy he felt at ſeeing him in town, and apologiſed for being ſo late before he returned. "Ay, ay, "we excuſe you," cried the governor: "we excuſe you; ha, Norris," and giving a cunning wink with his eye at Norris, ſhewed he thought himſelf as ſagacious in divining the buſineſs he had been about, as if Norris had not informed him of it. "You old batchel-"lors," ſaid Sir Charles, to ſhew he could take

take a hint, "know theſe matters ſo well, "there's no cheating you." "Very true, "very true," ſaid the governor; "I never "was miſtaken in an affair of that kind in "my life; it is amazing to think the number "of flirtations I diſcover at Bath." And indeed what he ſaid was very true, for he never ſaw a lady and gentleman dance twice together, that he did not ſuſpect an intrigue between them; in which it was ſometimes difficult to determine which to admire moſt, his ſagacity, or his invention: but as he himſelf always imputed the diſcovery to the former, and had no little ſatisfaction in ſo doing, it would have been cruel to have convinced him, which however would have been no eaſy matter to accompliſh, that it was generally the mere effect of the latter. I cannot, indeed, ſay that I know any talent which is more ſoothing to the pride of human nature, than this of ſagacity; nor, of courſe, any that is more pretended to. Every body foreſees every thing: the more ſanguine and leſs cautious venture to ſay, "I foretel how that will "turn out;" the more careful content themſelves with waiting till an event has happened, and then tell you, "they always thought that "would be the caſe;" which, as it is pretty difficult to contradict them, eſtabliſhes the

opinion

opinion of their ſagacity with leſs riſque than the former run, who are often reduced to the neceſſity of acknowledging that they thought ſo once, but (by way of ſaving clauſe) that they very ſoon ſaw to the contrary. Governor Beville was generally amongſt the former claſs; but whenever he happened, which was pretty often, to be miſtaken, he always ſaw his error long before it could be pointed out to him. "Did not I tell you, Sir Charles," cried he, with great exultation, "that you "had nothing to fear from Lord B.?" "You "did indeed," ſaid Sir Charles, "and you "was perfectly right in your conjectures." "Ay, ay," ſaid he, ſhaking his head and winking, "let me alone to find out thoſe "matters; and take my word for it, as I "told you before, you will have more plague "with that Sir Iſaac than you are aware of." It was unlucky—Nothing is ſo dangerous, eſpecially to thoſe who are not much accuſtomed to it, as a little ſucceſs: the governor, like many an enterpriſing genius, could not be contented to ſtop when he was well. Sir Charles was forced to retract the commendation he had juſt beſtowed on his foreſight, and inform him that Sir Iſaac had long ago withdrawn his pretenſions. It was unfortunate that he had not been cautious enough

to

to aſk a queſtion or two concerning him before he ventured to exert his ſagacity a ſecond time; it would have ſaved him a bluſh; but the change came ſo ſuddenly upon him, that he had not time to foreſee it; he had therefore nothing to do but to be very glad to hear what he could not divine, and to inquire into the circumſtances of his defeat. Sir Charles, under a promiſe of ſecrecy, let him into the whole of Mrs. Stapleton's management, which diverted the governor highly: "She's a cle-"ver woman," ſaid he; "and I always "thought ſo." And there his ſagacity went upon ſure grounds. "By the way, Norris," ſaid Sir Charles, "you and I are to wait upon "her this evening." "I am heartily glad "of it," ſaid Norris, "for I longed to know "what footing I was upon with her." The governor's ſagacity had met with a little encouragement with regard to Mrs. Stapleton, ſince its defeat with regard to Sir Iſaac, and ſo he was tempted to hazard another conjecture; and being confirmed by a little archneſs which he thought he ſpied in Norris's look, "Ahah!" cried he, "old friend, are you thereabouts? "Well—thus every body hunts in couples "but myſelf: I was in hopes, friend Norris, "I ſhould have kept you to lend me a hand

"to

"to laugh at the matrimonial ſhackles; but "I have heard a man is never too old to learn, "nor troth, I fear, to play the fool." "Why, "ſurely," ſaid Norris, "you are not grown ſo "very an old batchelor as to rail at matri-"mony?" "If you chooſe," ſaid the gover-nor, laughing, "to be led about in a ſtring, "I have no objection; but I remember "ſeeing in ſome book or other that there is "no woman ſo perfect, as not to give her "huſband cauſe to repent of his bargain once "a day; and I would have you remember it "too; that's all." Ay," replied Norris, "that is the quaint remark of a ſnarling "French author, who had rather ſay a ſmart "thing than a true one. But there is a large "volume which I ſtudy, called the Book of "Nature, which tells me juſt the contrary." The governor, who had raked together all the common-place arguments, or rather ſar-caſms, againſt matrimony, which are to be found in the performance of every ſatiriſt from Juvenal to Rochefoucault, and in the mouth of every old maid and batchelor, was pre-paring to retail them with that kind of envi-ous pleaſantry which unmarried people al-ways indulge when they arrive at a certain age; but Sir Charles, who was a ſtrenuous advocate for the contrary opinion, endeavoured

to

to change the ſubject. The governor however did not ſeem willing to give up the topic. People who can talk fluently upon a very few ſubjects, when one of thoſe few happens to be ſtarted, ſeldom care to part with it, till they have ſaid all they have to ſay. He had therefore begun to laugh by way of prelude to ſome ſtory about a dog with a bone at his tail, when a ſervant entering to announce dinner, ſtopped him ſhort.—In the evening the governor having promiſed Sir Charles to eat with him whilſt he ſtaid in town, adjourned to the coffee-houſe, and the two friends attended Mrs. Stapleton.

They found her alone. Sir Charles introduced his friend, and was very well pleaſed to ſee an air of ſurprize in her countenance, which, though he did not preciſely know the meaning of it, ſhewed he thought that ſhe was more pleaſed with his appearance than ſhe expected to be. Sir Charles's penetration was rather more certain than the governor's, and he ſhewed it here; for he hit upon her thoughts with great exactneſs.

The true ſtate of the caſe was this. The idea Mrs. Stapleton had formed of Mr. Norris was ſimply that of Sir Charles's tutor; with which ſhe had, without well knowing why, connected that of a large

grizzle wig, and other appurtenances of a grave and learned divine, for ſuch, notwithſtanding the gaiety of his letter, ſhe knew him to be. Nothing therefore could well equal her ſurprize, when Sir Charles introduced to her a genteel looking, well-dreſſed man, in his own hair, his clothes made like other peoples, and an air and manner which ſpoke him ſome years younger than he really was; that is to ſay, he was really thirty-ſeven, and might with much appearance of truth have ſtruck off the odd ſeven years. As therefore Mrs. Stapleton had never recollected that it was not neceſſary for a tutor to be more than twelve or thirteen years older than his pupil, ſhe was almoſt in doubt whether Sir Charles was not diverting himſelf with putting a falſe Mr. Norris upon her; and ſo ſtrong footing had her firſt idea gained in her mind, that, for the firſt quarter of an hour, ſhe expected every moment the grizzle wig to make its appearance. But before the next quarter was elapſed, ſhe had ſo well reconciled herſelf to the change, that a deceit of that kind would have vexed her very much.

Mr. Norris was not diſappointed at all; he expected, from Sir Charles's account,

to

to find Mrs. Stapleton one of the moſt agreeable women he had ever met with, and it turned out accordingly.

When the company were all ſo well pleaſed with one another, it was no wonder if the viſit was protracted rather beyond the limits which the ſtrict rules of ceremony might have allotted to a firſt viſit; but there is nothing which people of a certain rank of underſtanding ſo eaſily get over, as common rules which have not their foundation in reaſon and good ſenſe, and have nothing but cuſtom or convenience to plead for their obſervance.

Ceremony, ſays ſomebody, keeps fools at a diſtance; and in ſome caſes it is fit for little elſe; ſenſible people eaſily diſpenſe with it in favour of one another.

The gentlemen did not take their leave of Mrs. Stapleton, till the ratling of carriages hinted to them that parties were breaking up.

Sir Charles promiſed to call upon her in the morning, in order to have the appearance of a ſecond introduction at Sir Harry Clayton's, and Mr. Norris hoped ſhe would do him the honour to put his

name amongſt the admiſſible part of her viſitors; to which ſhe had the goodneſs to bow an aſſent, and ſo they parted for the night.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Two Cauſes tried in the Court of Conſcience with different Deciſions. An Ounce of Candour better than a Pound of Wit. A Walk in the Morning the beſt Receipt to cure Cowardice.

AS ſoon as the gentlemen were gone, Mrs. Stapleton ſtirred the fire, reſumed her great chair, and whilſt the ſervant laid her cloth for ſupper, fell into a profound reverie: from which ſhe was ſomewhat rouſed by the appearance of her cold chicken; which, without being perfectly ſenſible of what ſhe did, ſhe cut up, eat half a mouthful, gave away her plate, ſaid ſhe had done, reſumed her place at the fire and her reverie, which laſted till the uſual hour of her retiring to reſt. It is not difficult to imagine the ſubject of her thoughts. In truth ſhe was conſidering of the reception ſhe ſhould give Mr. Norris at his next viſit; for it required far leſs penetration than ſhe was miſtreſs of, to diſcover that her conjectures with regard to Sir Charles's intentions were well-grounded, and

that probably the next viſit Mr. Norris made her, might be of a very intereſting nature. It was certain that ſhe felt nothing very ſhocking in the thought of entering into a ſecond marriage: nay, it was a thought which, long before ſhe had ſeen Mr. Norris, ſhe had entertained with partiality. She was indeed too well formed for ſociety, to reliſh a life of ſolitude; and her underſtanding was too good, to ſuffer her to miſtake the diſſipation of public life for ſociety.—With minds capable of, and accuſtomed to, reflection, nothing palls ſooner upon the enjoyment, than that pleaſure which is to be ſought after abroad, without any thing to crown it at home; and though no body could enjoy pleaſure more than ſhe did, no body, at the ſame time, had higher ideas of that ſolid happineſs which ariſes from the moſt endearing connection which the human mind is capable of forming. There was nothing therefore to deter her from the thoughts of a ſecond marriage in general, but with regard to engaging in it with a man to whom ſhe was almoſt a ſtranger; but by report, her prudence and diſcretion threw ſeveral obſtacles in her way, which a riſing inclination in his favour, of which ſhe was but too ſenſible, had much difficulty to ſurmount. She endeavoured, as ſhe flattered herſelf, to give

give both ſides fair play; and, to ſay the truth, examined *Le pour* and *Le contre*, with as much candour as ſhe was able. *Le pour* took the lead, and repreſented Mr. Norris with all the advantages which a great underſtanding, improved by an unwearied attention to every thing that was worth knowing; a temper, a diſpoſition formed to enjoy happineſs, and of courſe to promote it; a character for integrity, candour and benevolence, which few could equal, and none excel; a perſon very far from diſagreeable, and a manner peculiarly engaging, could give him. 'Twas ſufficient to ſtagger a mind inclining to the other ſide: hers had no ſuch inclination. However, *Le contre* was not without ſomething to ſay in behalf of what is commonly called diſcretion: every allowance was made for the partiality of Sir Charles, from whom ſhe had learnt all the aboveſaid good qualities, except the two laſt; in favour of which ſhe had more poſitive evidence from her own ſenſes. Every thing was ſuggeſted with regard to procraſtination, in order to the forming a judgment for herſelf, without depending wholly upon the report of another: in ſhort, every thing was ſaid, that prudence and diſcretion uſually do ſay againſt inclination, and with the uſual ſucceſs. As ſhe was aſhamed, however, to give up the point at

the firſt hearing, ſhe determined to conſult her pillow upon it. She accordingly retired to reſt; and in the morning found herſelf juſt where ſhe had been over night; in a ſtate of deliberation: but before ſhe had breakfaſted, the arrival of Sir Charles and Mr. Norris put an end to the diſpute, and convinced her that her's was that kind of deliberation, the conſequence of which to every woman the poet told us long ago.

Whilſt the above cauſe had been trying at Mrs. Stapleton's fire-ſide, the two gentlemen had been engaged in a different ſort of conteſt. Sir Charles, who was convinced that his own difficulties were now pretty well at an end, was in the greateſt harmony of ſpirits imaginable; and as nothing breeds confidence like ſucceſs, he could not help rallying Norris for a ſuſpicion which his modeſty had ſuggeſted, which was no other than, that Mrs. Stapleton, with her figure, eaſy in her fortune, and connected with people of rank, would never think of marrying him. He could not help being conſcious, that though his birth was not mean, it was obſcure; and though, from the generoſity of Sir Charles and the late Sir George Beville, his fortune was eaſy and independent, yet he well knew how ſmall a chance a retired, quiet kind of man ſtands

with

with a lady who has been accuſtomed to the more buſy and elegant ſcenes of life; and therefore could not help expreſſing his fears, that whatever civility Mrs. Stapleton might ſhew him, was the mere effect of her good-breeding, and her friendſhip for Sir Charles, and was what he ought not to build any hopes upon. Sir Charles could not help laughing at his fears, and telling him, that though he knew the world, he did not know Mrs. Stapleton; who, though ſhe was uſed to, and every way qualified to ſhine in, public life, had, nevertheleſs, the higheſt idea of domeſtic felicity. He would have it too, that he had obſerved a partiality and attention in her behaviour to him, which did not ſeem the mere effect of politeneſs: but Norris, who had found means to reconcile two qualities, which are at variance in almoſt every other man, namely, the addreſs of the man of the world, and the diffidence of the man of letters, could not be brought to believe any ſuch thing. This diſpute laſted till they retired to reſt, and concluded in a very uncommon way; that is to ſay, all Sir Charles's arguments were unable to prevail on Norris to decide in favour of his own inclination, or to have a good opinion of himſelf.

And here, reader, a ſatirical writer would affect to ſhew you the difference between a man and a woman under the ſame circumſtances. "See here," would he ſay, "Mr. Norris, a "ſenſible man could combat not only his "own inclination, but all the arguments "which his friend, of whoſe judgment he "had the higheſt opinion, could bring to "back it; and give his diſcretion a complete "triumph over it at laſt; whereas Mrs. "Stapleton, whoſe inclination had no friend "to give it any ſupport, ſuffered her judge-"ment to ſuſtain a ſhameful defeat, and gave "her inclination as compleat a triumph over "her diſcretion." But, reader, I am no ſatiriſt; I eſteem an ounce of candour before a pound of wit, becauſe I look upon it to be a commodity the moſt difficult to be met with of any in the world, not excepting even virtue itſelf: nay, I am convinced it is an eaſier thing to lead a blameleſs life one's ſelf, than to be ſtrictly candid in our judgment upon the actions of others. In order therefore to preſerve the appearance at leaſt of this valuable qualification, I ſhall ſuppoſe, which is ſtrictly true, that Mrs. Stapleton had no inclination that ſhe was either afraid or aſhamed to indulge; and that Mr. Norris, which is as true, had more modeſty than he need have had.

In

In the morning Sir Charles, who was dreſſed an hour and a half before his uſual time, and could not be perſuaded but his watch muſt have ſtood ſtill in the night, having quite exhauſted his ſtock of patience, and finding that Norris did not yet arrive in the breakfaſt-room, went up and thundered at his door. He was not a little ſurprized, inſtead of finding him dreſſing, to find that he was gone out: by the time, however, he got down ſtairs again, Mr. Norris was pulling off his gloves by the fire. "I have been taking "a walk," ſaid he, "to endeavour to get a "little aſſurance." "It is the ſtrangeſt rea- "ſon for walking," replied Sir Charles, "that ever I heard in my life: I have heard "of walking to get air, exerciſe or an appe- "tite, but never to get aſſurance." "Why," ſaid Norris, "every thing that you ſaid to "me laſt night has been rumbling about in "my head ever ſince; and to ſay the truth, "I never had ſo great an inclination for any "thing in my life as to believe you." "That "is to ſay," ſaid Sir Charles, "that you are "in love with Mrs. Stapleton." "Troth," replied Norris, "was I a few years younger, "I ſhould think ſo; but, as it is, I only "have a very high opinion of her, and ſhould "be very happy to marry her." "Why

"then take my word for it," ſaid Sir Charles, "if your modeſty does not ſtand in your "way, you may: I would adviſe you there-"fore to turn it out of doors, and ſummon "all the reſolution you are maſter of, and try "your chance; you will then, at leaſt, have "nothing to reproach yourſelf with." "That "is the very thing," ſaid Norris, "that I have "been taking a walk for; to ſet my blood "and ſpirits in motion; for there is nothing "makes a man ſo unfit for any enterprize, as "undertaking it with his ſenſes half awake. "I am convinced, that had I been a ſoldier, I "could have fought much better after a good, "ſmart, ratling march of four or five miles, "than I could have done upon juſt putting "my head out of tent, with my eyes half "open, and nothing but my caution and ap-"prehenſion awake about me: I never ride "with half ſo much ſpirit a fox-hunting as "when I trot my poney ſeven or eight miles "to the cover. "Why, really," ſaid Sir Charles, "you have explained the notion of "acquiring courage, by taking a walk in the "morning, in a way I was not aware of, and "with ſome degree of plauſibility." "O, "Sir," cried he, "there is nothing like it; "depend upon it, after a good ſound ſleep, "the faculties open by degrees: the next

"ſtate

"ſtate to ſleep is the moſt like it; you open "an eye, ſtretch out a limb, are ſtupid as a "brick, and barely alive: the moſt ſleepy fa-"culties of the mind, as fear, caution, diſ-"truſt, and what the world call diſcretion, "open next: ſome people never get beyond "this ſtate, and are never rightly awake all "their lives; theſe are the world's prudent "men. Then, when the blood begins to "get into motion, the heart warms, and the "animal ſpirits buſtle about with ſuch acti-"vity, as to ſtir a man up to the pitch of ge-"nerosity, ambition, love, courage, and all "the ſtrenuous paſſions of the mind, which "prudent people reſtrain, diſcreet people "ſhake their heads at, and lively people are "perhaps too apt to carry to exceſs. Such a "man the French, according to my ſyſtem, "call *Eveilleé*. And a ſleepy man, without "ſuch paſſions, muſt always be without "their concomitant virtues; for Rouſſeau "never made a truer obſervation in his life, "than *Un homme ſans defauts jamais n'eut il des "grands vertus.*"

By this time the gentlemen had breakfaſted, and went to attend Mrs. Stapleton. They found her, as we have already ſeen, juſt riſing from her breakfaſt.

CHAP. V.

A great deal of Buſineſs done in a very little Time, and recorded in a very narrow Compaſs.

MR. Norris could not have arrived at an inſtant when Mrs. Stapleton was more diſpoſed to receive him favourably. She had begun to canvas the affair again in her mind, and had juſt finiſhed every thing which her inclination had to ſuggeſt in his favour, when, juſt as her diſcretion was going again to take its turn, he entered; and in ten minutes time rendered every thing it had to ſay ſo ridiculous, that from that inſtant it never gained another audience, till, which was very ſoon the caſe, it was entirely brought over to the other ſide of the queſtion.—When a lady, either from inclination or any other motive, is determined to take any ſtep, ſhe preſently finds means not only to influence her judgment to allow of it, but to prove that it is the wiſeſt and propereſt ſtep ſhe ever took in her life.—A very agreeable converſation very ſoon began, which would have laſted much longer than it did, had

had not Sir Charles's impatience to ſee Miſs Clayton induced him to interrupt it, by putting Mrs. Stapleton in mind that it was high time to move. "Aye," ſaid ſhe, "it is ſo; for "I intend, after I have introduced you there, "to take a walk through the Parks, and call "upon a lady in Weſtminſter, as the morning "promiſes to be fine." This was too favourable an opportunity for Mr. Norris to let ſlip; he therefore told Sir Charles, that he would call and pay his compliments to Sir Harry, "and "then," continued he, "as I ſhould be "ſorry to give you any interruption, poſſibly "Mrs. Stapleton will permit me to have the "honour of attending her." To which Sir Charles agreed, and Mrs. Stapleton did not think proper to diſagree, and ſo they ſet out together.

Sir Harry had been prepared for Sir Charles's reception, ever ſince ten o'clock: and when the clock ſtruck twelve, and no Sir Charles appeared, a viſible chagrin ſat upon his countenance, and he began to believe firmly that he was inexorable, and would not come. As he was intirely ignorant of the reaſons which Miſs Clayton had *in petto* for being convinced of the contrary, he was aſtoniſhed to ſee her ſo compoſed: he concluded it was all affectation, and partly hinted to her that he thought

ſo:

ſo: ſhe neither allowed it, nor took much pains to contradict it; perhaps it was as well for her that he ſhould think ſo. At laſt a rap at the door brought the blood into Miſs Clayton's cheeks, and carried Sir Harry to the bell, which he rang with as much vehemence, as if he feared Sir Charles would go away again, if he was not let in in an inſtant.—There is nothing ſo diſtreſſing for all parties, as a preconcerted interview, which is to paſs for accidental: it was impoſſible to ſee the affected ſurprize of Sir Harry at ſeeing Sir Charles in town, and to hear the civil things he ſaid upon this unexpected favour, without thinking of the meeting between *Sir Amorous la Fool*, and *Sir John Daw*, in the *Silent Woman*. Mrs. Stapleton was at laſt forced to wave the converſation, for fear ſhe ſhould not be able to keep her countenance. Sir Charles could not conceal his joy at ſeeing Miſs Clayton; he was a bad diſſembler; and had Sir Harry been endowed with a tolerable ſhare of penetration, he muſt have diſcovered that leſs contrivance, than had been uſed to bring him back, would have effected it.

Mrs. Stapleton inquired after Lady Clayton; Miſs Clayton ſaid ſhe was walked out. The truth of the caſe was, that ſhe did not appear, to ſave herſelf the trouble of framing

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an excuſe for diſappearing. Sir Harry ordered chocolate, ſoon after which Mrs. Stapleton and Mr. Norris proceeded on their walk, and Sir Harry going to attend them to the door, thought proper to go into his ſtudy, and ſend a ſervant to Sir Charles, to beg his excuſe for a few minutes, as a perſon was juſt come in upon buſineſs which he was obliged to attend to. And thus, after a great deal of contrivance, he accompliſhed the leaving two young people together, whom he had been for the laſt quarter of a year, with equal contrivance, endeavouring to keep aſunder.

I ſuppoſe it is impoſſible for two people to feel more real happineſs than Miſs Clayton and Sir Charles felt at this interview: the retroſpect upon the difficulties they had met with, and the ſingular means by which they had been removed, adding not a little to it.—And here let it be remembered that their joy was infinitely more ſincere than that of two young people, who after bribing ſervants, riſquing lives, and performing forty extravagant *manœuvres*, make ſhift to drive off in a poſt-chaiſe for Scotland together, becauſe it was not allayed by any diſagreeable ſenſations which will ariſe from a conſciouſneſs of having done an unjuſtifiable thing, and made a father and mother wretched for their own indulgence.

dulgence. Had Sir Charles and Miſs Clayton been bent upon coming together at all events, there was nothing that could have prevented them, at firſt, from walking out of the door, and being married at their own pariſh church, without any previous ceremony more than the ring and licence, as they were both of age, and Miſs Clayton's fortune, independent of her father, would very well have ſatisfied Sir Charles: but with delicate minds, to accompliſh their wiſhes is not the only point in view; it muſt be done by ſuch means as will leave no ſeeds of remorſe and repentance behind. Miſs Clayton could no more have enjoyed her ſituation in life, however agreeable to her wiſhes it might have been, with the reflection of having attained it by acting in direct oppoſition to the inclination of her father, and thereby imbittering the reſt of his days, than Sir Charles could have got the better of his integrity ſo far, as to obtain a daughter at the expence of her duty to her father; or of his pride, by obtruding himſelf into an alliance with any family againſt their inclination. They had now not only the ſatisfaction of indulging their own inclinations, but of finding them coincide with the wiſhes of every one whoſe happineſs, jointly with their own, they were bound to conſult.

With

With theſe pleaſing reflections they had enjoyed two hours of the moſt enviable of all ſituations, when Miſs Clayton began to think it was high time to put an end to a viſit, the reſult of which ſhe knew her father would be impatient to hear. Sir Charles was ſurprized, upon looking at his watch, to find it ſo late; and, having obtained Miſs Clayton's leave to wait on Sir Harry the next morning to ſolicit his conſent in form, he took his leave.—Norris and he met at the door; both in ſuch ſeeming harmony of ſpirits, that it was not difficult to ſee they were both very well pleaſed with their morning's entertainment.

Mr. Norris was, in truth, very well pleaſed with his walk; the ſun ſhone bright, and gave a genial, exhilarating kind of warmth, which is ever favourable to pleaſurable ſentiments: and as, according to his own maxim, he found his reſolution grow ſtronger at every ſtep he took, going down Conſtitution-hill, he ventured upon a ſort of a declaration, which, though Mrs. Stapleton affected to receive with an air of pleaſantry, he thought he ſaw by her manner was not unexpected; which is a great ſtep towards its being not unpleaſing. And indeed, though ſhe could not be ſaid to have given him much encouragement, yet

yet ſhe gave him ſomething ſo very like it, that he had great reaſon to be ſatisfied: ſo that, upon the whole, both the friends had as agreeable proſpects before them as they could deſire.—They found the governor ſitting by the parlour fire, with what he thought no diſagreeable proſpect before him, which conſiſted of three News-papers, four Magazines, and the two Reviews; ſome or other of which productions were his conſtant ſtudy. The firſt were his never-failing companions, as containing what every man wanted to know; the ſecond he was very partial to, as containing many little detached anecdotes, in which his learning a good deal conſiſted; and the laſt he ſometimes looked into, becauſe they enabled him to ſay ſomething or other, it was not very material whether true or falſe, about books, without the trouble of reading them attentively; a reaſon which influences many greater pretenders to learning than Governor Beville was, and which indeed renders theſe two monthly twelvepenny-worths of criticiſm the moſt uſeful to lawyers clerks, ſtudious journeymen, critical apprentices, country ſchool-maſters, and all the

the lower order of literati, of any books extant.

"Well," ſaid the governor, "when "am I to give you joy, Sir Charles?"

"Gently, gently, my dear Governor," ſaid Sir Charles, "I have not got my "paſſport yet; I have only ſeen Sir "Harry *en paſſant* to-day, to-morrow is to "be the day of buſineſs."

"How ridiculous it is," ſaid the governor, "to make ſo much ceremony "about an affair, when you are all of "one mind! I will venture a wager "now, that Norris and his goddeſs, who "have no body's conſent to aſk but their "own, which by the way is, I dare ſay, "ready for aſking for, will make as long "a jobb too, as if they had each of "them fathers and mothers and a whole "circle of uncles and aunts into the "bargain to perplex them."

"Troth, ſaid Norris, "it is very "likely; I don't underſtand much of "forms and ceremonies, but I promiſe "you there ſhall be none that I can "help."

"Well, well," ſaid the governor, "mind "what I ſay; I ſtay in town juſt ſix "weeks; and if I don't ſee you both

"fairly

" fairly ſnickled before I go, I'll never " forgive either of you."

The two gentlemen both promiſed to do their beſt, and retiring to dreſs before dinner, left the governor once more to his ſtudies.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Sir Charles has an Audience of Sir Harry, and half carries his Point with Miſs Clayton.

IN the evening the gentlemen went all together to make a viſit to the Barkers, whom the governor had never ſeen in their proſperity; and he had too much goodneſs of heart not to promiſe himſelf much pleaſure in being witneſs to the happy change in their ſituation. Sir Charles promiſed himſelf ſome ſatisfaction alſo in introducing the governor to old Mr. Barker, who he imagined would be much taken with him, as his character had ſome peculiarities in it, which marked it from the common run of men; and he knew Mr. Barker thought the diſcovery of a character, which had any thing particular in its caſt, like the diſcovering a mine; which, with little pains in the working, would turn to very good account. He was very right in his conjecture; for when he introduced them to each other, he ſaw that Mr. Barker eyed the governor with that ſort of penetrating look, with which

which an accurate obſerver ſurveys an object which appears to contain ſomething worth notice. There was ſomething indeed in his dreſs and addreſs ſo peculiarly his own, as ſpoke at once a mine for Mr. Barker; and he accordingly attached himſelf to him, the whole evening, with an attention that won the governor's heart: the conſequence of which was, that, during his ſtay in town, Mr. Barker and he were ſeldom aſunder.—Mrs. Barker informed Sir Charles, that Lord Timon was in town, that ſhe had been that morning to wait on Lady Mary, and was to have the honour of attending her to Carliſle-Houſe the evening but one following. "I am glad of "it," ſaid Sir Charles, "for as I know Miſs "Clayton intends being there," [for he now made no ſecret of his match amongſt his friends] "I ſhall be glad of that opportunity of "introducing two of the moſt amiable women "in the world to each other, and of ſhewing "Lady Mary her future neighbour." Mrs. Barker aſſured him he could not do her a greater favour, for that ſhe longed for nothing ſo much as to be known to a lady of whom ſhe had heard ſo much.

As theſe two families did not viſit at all according to the London ſtile of viſiting, it was late before they parted, and after ſupper, in

ſpite of all Mrs. Barker could ſay againſt it, old Mr. Barker inſiſted upon ſmoking a pipe of Britiſh-herb with the governor; which they had both lately diſcovered to be the beſt thing in the world for the eyes.

The next morning Sir Charles and Mr. Norris betook themſelves to their reſpective poſts, one in Brook-Street, the other in Bond-Street. Sir Charles found Sir Harry Clayton had been waiting for him, for he had never recollected that it was drawing-room day, and that Sir Harry was in waiting. His chariot had been ſome time at the door; but as he knew Sir Charles's buſineſs was with him, and longed very much to have matters ſettled as faſt as poſſible, he waited half an hour beyond his time, in order, if poſſible, to ſee him before he went. As ſoon as Sir Charles therefore arrived, he was conducted into the ſtudy, where he found Sir Harry reading a Newspaper, which he had juſt had time to run to his chair and take up, whilſt Sir Charles ſtood at the door; his poſt, for the laſt half hour, having been at the window, with that kind of expecting face, with which a ſchool-boy ſtands at the gate the morning his father's horſes are to fetch him home. Sir Charles began in the uſual ſtile to talk about the morning, and ſo forth; but Sir Harry, by making

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an apology for leaving him the day before, and pulling out his watch, which, together with the chariot at the door, he thought might ſerve as a hint that he was going to leave him again, gave him to underſtand that he wiſhed him to come to buſineſs as ſoon as poſſible. Sir Charles was excellent at taking a hint; he began therefore with inquiring after the ladies by way of introduction; and from thence proceeding to ſome handſome things with regard to Miſs Clayton, he got, by a pretty eaſy tranſition, to the main buſineſs; which he opened with a very honeſt account of his own circumſtances, and concluded with a very generous offer of complying with any demand Sir Harry could make conſiſtently with the neceſſary proviſion for a family. Sir Harry, who was by no means himſelf deficient in point of generoſity, after having got over the little ſurpriſe which it was neceſſary ſuch a declaration ſhould throw him into, and made ſome civil ſpeeches upon the occaſion, in which he was ſtill leſs deficient than in the former point, proceeded to acquaint Sir Charles with the ſtate of Miſs Clayton's fortune; what ſhe had in her own power, and what ſhe might hereafter expect from him; he then concluded with ſaying, that he by no means

wiſhed

wiſhed to preſcribe to Sir Charles, but was ſure he ſhould be ſatisfied with with whatever offer he ſhould think proper to make. To ſay the truth, this anſwer had been adviſed by Lady Clayton; "For," ſaid ſhe, "I dare "ſay he vill offer more than you could aſk." A piece of policy which I ſuppoſe ſhe had learnt from the lower order of gentry, whoſe ſervices being of ſo trifling a nature as to render it difficult to aſcertain their real value, they chooſe to apply to the generoſity of their employers, rather than their juſtice, by which means, "What your honour pleaſes," often gets half-a-crown, where the legal demand might have been ſixpence. And it ſucceeded here to a miracle: Sir Charles made an offer ſo much beyond what Sir Harry expected, that, ſo far from having any thoughts of aſking it, he was in great doubt whether he ought not to refuſe it. But it ſeems Lady Clayton had ſuſpected that his eagerneſs for the match would draw him in to make ſome fooliſh bargain, and had, therefore, made him promiſe two things; one was, to make no demand, for the reaſon above given; the other was, to take whatever was offered; unleſs, which ſhe knew Sir Charles too well to be much in fear of, it ſhould be too little. I dare ſay, therefore, nothing but having inadvertently made

this promiſe, could have induced Sir Harry to have accepted a ſettlement for his daughter at leaſt double to what he had any right to expect: as the caſe ſtood, he was obliged to comply.

This important buſineſs being thus ſettled to the mutual ſatisfaction of the parties, Sir Charles went up to the ladies, and Sir Harry went where he ought to have gone an hour before. Whether by accident or deſign I cannot tell, Sir Charles found Lady Clayton alone in the drawing-room. It might have been expected that a conſciouſneſs of the manner in which ſhe had behaved to him the laſt time they met, would have rendered his firſt viſit a little diſtreſſing: but as Sir Charles was by no means of the order of people who love to triumph on thoſe occaſions, ſo neither was Lady Clayton one of thoſe who create difficulties for themſelves by an exceſſive delicacy of ſentiment: Sir Charles therefore could not be more ready to forget that ſhe had ever behaved ill to him than ſhe was herſelf. When therefore he told her the buſineſs he had been upon with Sir Harry, and hoped he ſhould have her concurrence in what had been ſettled between them, ſhe, relying upon her inſtructions to Sir Harry, found not the leaſt difficulty in ſaying, that "ſhe thought the family wery "much

"much obliged to him, and that he might be "ſure ſhe could not have any objection to an "alliance vich any family might be proud of." Sir Charles, who was perfectly well ſatisfied to compromiſe matters, and forgive her all the trouble ſhe had given him, upon condition of her giving him no more, was going to make proper acknowledgments, when the arrival of Miſs Clayton prevented him.—After the firſt civilities, Lady Clayton had conſideration enough to find out that there are certain ſubjects, which, though they may be equally known to three people, ſo that any two of them may converſe freely upon them in the abſence of the third, it is nevertheleſs difficult to enter upon in the preſence of all three: ſhe therefore thought it might be both proper and convenient for her to withdraw. And here again that delicacy, which upon theſe occaſions puts people upon making forty fooliſh excuſes, gave her no trouble at all: why, thought ſhe, ſhould I tell a fib and ſay, I want to go for this and that, and t'other, when the truth will do juſt as well? So getting up with a laugh, "I ſuppoſe," ſaid ſhe, "you would "as lief have my room as my company." A ſurmiſe which they did not think proper to contradict; upon which ſhe left them without farther ceremony.

Every difficulty which had for ſome time obſtructed his happineſs, being now removed, Sir Charles, leſt any unforeſeen accident ſhould ariſe, was for haſtening it as much as poſſible, and was very earneſt with Miſs Clayton to fix the day on which ſhe would put him in poſſeſſion of every thing he held moſt dear, and by that means put it out of the power of fate or Lady Clayton to do him any farther deſpite. But, whether it is that young ladies, when they have a bleſſing within their reach, are not ſo eager to enjoy it as they were when they thought it impoſſible to get at it, or, whether the natural timidity of the ſex makes them willing to poſtpone the hour which is to determine the future happineſs of their lives, I cannot tell, but the fact is certainly true; as I dare ſay every man who has tried it well knows, that it is not half ſo difficult to prevail upon a lady to have one at all, as it is to bring her to fix the day. At length, after a great deal of that rhetoric which hardly any woman can reſiſt, ſhe was brought to a compromiſe. "Well then," ſaid ſhe, "Sir "Charles, I muſt intruſt you with a ſecret, "which you muſt give me your honour not "to divulge till a proper time." Sir Charles was in a humour to promiſe any thing. "You "muſt know then," ſaid ſhe, "that your

"friend

" friend Norris is teizing my friend Stapleton " juſt in the ſame way as you are plaguing " me; that may be no ſecret to you, perhaps, " but poſſibly it may be that ſhe, ſome time or " other, intends to comply with his requeſt." " I am rejoiced to hear it," cried Sir Charles. " O," ſaid ſhe, " but you muſt keep her " counſel, and not give a hint of her reſolu- " tion to your friend, till ſhe ſhall be pleaſed " to let him know it herſelf; and whenever " that happens, upon the ſame day that ſhe " condeſcends to make your friend happy, " I think I muſt determine to take my " chance with you: ſo now you need not preſs " me any farther, for you ſee the day is not in " my power." Sir Charles finding he could get no better terms, was glad to accept of theſe; ſo aſſuring her that he would not ſuffer Norris to have a moment's reſt till he had carried his point, he took his leave.

CHAP. VII.

A ſhort Chapter, containing the Opening of a very alarming Adventure.

EVERY thing went on ſmoothly and well for ſeveral days, and Miſs Clayton, who poſſibly began to think that her friend had ſacrificed enough to punctilio, and had now a right to follow her inclination, had put every thing in great forwardneſs for the celebration of a day, which ſhe neither expected nor wiſhed to be far off. Mrs. Stapleton, after having ſaid and done every thing that is uſual on ſuch occaſions, was at length prevailed upon to make Mr. Norris happy. But, as ſhe had not ſo profeſſedly made preparations for the occaſion as her friend had, ſhe had a great deal to do, and was therefore under the neceſſity of treſpaſſing upon the patience of the reſt of the party for another fortnight; a demand which two, at leaſt, of them found ſome difficulty in complying with: but neither ſhe, nor her mantua-maker, could diſpenſe with an hour of it, ſo they were forced to ſubmit, and the important day was fixed accordingly. In

the mean time the neceſſary articles of ſilks, ſattins, and lace, were carried on with as much expedition as poſſible. Poor Mrs. Jenny had ſo many walks and ſo many freſh orders for Mrs. Bond, and every thing was to be executed in ſuch a hurry, that at laſt the inquiſitive millener took an opportunity of aſking her what all this extraordinary preparation was for? A wedding is the thing in the world upon which ladies women love moſt to expatiate. Mrs. Jenny therefore, who had every qualification which a lady's woman ought to have, wanted not a ſecond invitation to diſplay her talents upon her favourite topic; ſo beginning at the firſt of her lady's acquaintance with Miſs Clayton, the firſt year ſhe lived with her, which was eight years ago laſt June, who brought her acquainted with Sir Charles Beville, who brought her acquainted with Mr. Norris, to whom ſhe was to be married the next week: ſhe ran on with the whole ſtory, with all its *ifs* and *ands*; to which the millener paid more than ordinary attention. Mrs. Jenny was all this time waiting for a cap which wanted but a quarter of an hour's work to finiſh it; but by the time ſhe had finiſhed her ſtory half an hour had elapſed, and the cap ſtill wanting a quarter of an hour to finiſh it, Mrs. Bond beg-

ged ſhe might ſend it, or that Mrs. Jenny would give herſelf the trouble to call again in the evening, when the cap and ſome other things ſhould be ready for her to carry home together. Mrs. Jenny choſe the latter; and accordingly, as ſoon as her lady was gone to Sir Harry Clayton's, where the whole party was to ſpend their evening, ſhe betook herſelf to Mrs. Bond's.——Mrs. Bond was drinking her tea, and entreated Mrs. Jenny, who wanted not much entreaty, to walk into the back ſhop and drink a diſh with her. She then took an opportunity to ſet her tongue a going once more, and having made many inquiries about Mr. Norris, and learnt every thing about him which Mrs. Jenny could tell her, which was abundantly ſufficient for her purpoſe, ſhe ſtept into the ſhop to fetch the bandbox for her, and at the ſame time gave her a letter, ſaying, "Be ſo good, Mrs. Jenny, as "deliver this to your lady: I am very ſorry "to give her any uneaſineſs, but it is abſo-"lutely neceſſary ſhe ſhould be acquainted "with ſome circumſtances of which that will "inform her." Mrs. Jenny did not comprehend one word of the ſpeech, nor did Mrs. Bond think proper to explain herſelf.——Mrs. Jenny's curioſity to know the contents of the letter, made her think that her lady ſtaid very late

late at Sir Harry Clayton's. To ſay the truth, the party were ſo happy in one another, that they did not think of breaking up very early: Mr. Norris, in particular, had been in ſuch high ſpirits, and ſo entertaining and agreeable, that Mrs. Stapleton felt herſelf more and more attached to him every minute; and, to ſay the truth, almoſt wiſhed that each of the next five or ſix days could conſiſt of leſs than twenty-four hours. As ſoon as ſhe arrived at home, Mrs. Jenny preſented her box; "And, Ma-"dam," ſaid ſhe, "I cannot tell, what Mrs. "Bond means, but to be ſure ſhe has fright-"ed me out of my very wits; for ſhe deſir-"ed I would give you this letter, and ſaid "it would make you uneaſy, and ſhe was "very ſorry; but that it was neceſſary you "ſhould know ſomething that is in it." "A "letter from Mrs. Bond make me uneaſy, "Jenny!" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton. "I think I "could lay a good wager againſt that; but "let us ſee however." She took the letter, and having run her eye over it, Mrs. Jenny, who watched her looks with much attention, was alarmed to ſee her colour go and come, and would have given all ſhe was worth in the world to have known the contents of the letter.—Mrs. Stapleton was indeed alarmed, but not ſufficiently to throw her off her guard;

as therefore ſhe thought there might be ſome miſtake, or ſome villainy in the contents of the letter, ſhe did not chooſe to diſcloſe them, till the perſon moſt concerned in them had been conſulted. She therefore made light of it to her woman, but retired to reſt in the greateſt diſcompoſure of mind that poſſibly ſhe had ever experienced. Her ſagacious woman, who plainly ſaw ſhe was diſturbed, and alſo knew that it was not a trifle that could diſturb her, was apprehenſive ſomething very terrible was the matter, and ſuffered, that worſt of all ſenſations, the fearing that ſhe knew not what would happen.—Certain fears admit of certain comforts; but the fear of one knows not what, knows no alleviation or bounds; which is the reaſon that the apprehenſion which old women and children have of ſpirits and apparitions, is the moſt diſmaying of all fears.—This ſort of uncertain apprehenſion Mrs. Jenny ſuffered all that night; and as it would have been too much for her to have endured another night, ſhe determined, if her lady was not more communicative in the morning, to make an errand to the millener, to try if ſhe could get any thing out of her. Some dark hints indeed, which Mrs. Bond had dropped in converſation, helped, in ſome ſmall degree, to aſcertain

tain the object of her fears; but as it directed them to the moſt formidable of all diſaſters, ſomething or other happening to prevent her lady's match taking place, that was but ſmall comfort, and ſhe was willing to find ſome other object for them if ſhe could. A wedding in the family ſeemed to promiſe ſuch a ſcene of mirth and jollity, that it was no wonder if, next to that of her own ſweetheart, Mrs. Jenny thought the loſs of it the worſt accident that could happen. Both miſtreſs and maid probably found this the longeſt night they had ever paſſed in their lives. At length, however, the morning arrived, which was to diſperſe or confirm all their apprehenſions.

CHAP. VIII.

Continuation of the Adventure.

THAT you may not, reader, be at any loſs to comprehend the meaning of this perplexing affair, which is now going to be opened to you, I would adviſe you to recollect, or, if your memory happens to be weak, which if you have either a great deal of wit, or none at all, may poſſibly be the caſe, to turn back to the firſt book of theſe Memoirs, in which Mr. Norris relates the adventures which happened to him in the early part of his life.—There;—now you have done that, you will be very well able to underſtand what follows.

Mrs. Stapleton aroſe the next morning about her uſual time, but not with her uſual chearful ſerenity of mind, nor yet with that agreeable hurry of ſpirits, which the preparations ſhe had been, for the laſt week, engaged in, uſed to excite. During the time of breakfaſt, Mrs. Jenny obſerved ſhe was thoughtful, uneaſy, and even pettiſh; a kind of humour in which ſhe had never before ſeen her, during the eight years that ſhe had

had lived with her. Several times had ſhe determined to beg to be permitted to ſhare her anxiety, but an unuſual auſterity ſat upon her countenance, which as often deterred her from her purpoſe. At length a tear, which ſhe thought ſhe ſaw ſtealing down her cheek, had well nigh made her break through all reſtraint, for ſhe really loved her miſtreſs, when the arrival of Mr. Norris again prevented her.

Generous minds never harbour a ſuſpicion of an honeſt man, till he has had an opportunity of anſwering his accuſers. Mrs. Stapleton therefore received Mr. Norris with her uſual kindneſs, not to ſay affection: ſhe neither indeed was able, nor endeavoured to hide the uneaſineſs that hung upon her mind; and his penetration and love both combined to ſhew it him in an inſtant. "What am I "to think, my deareſt Madam," ſaid he, "of an uneaſineſs which I ſee in your coun- "tenance for the firſt time, when I ſhould "hope, if poſſible, to ſee in it an additional "chearfulneſs?" "I know not," ſaid ſhe, "what to think of it myſelf; it is not abſo- "lutely without reaſon, and yet it is, I dare "ſay, ſo very near it, that I almoſt blame "myſelf for giving way to it. This letter, "which I received laſt night, will poſſibly "explain."———Mr. Norris took the letter,

ter, and, casting his eye over the superscription, turned as pale as death, and had hardly strength to read what follows.

" Madam,

" I HOPE you will have the goodness to " pardon my troubling you with this, but " an affair of the utmost consequence ren- " ders it absolutely necessary.

" I am, Madam, informed, that you are " upon the point of marriage with a Mr. " Norris, of Northamptonshire. I am very " sorry that he should have any thoughts of " entering into such an engagement with " you, as he must be conscious that he is " under the strongest engagements with an- " other person. It is many years, Madam, " since Mr. Norris and myself were con- " nected with each other; but as I have " now in my possession more than one pro- " mise of marriage under his hand, notwith- " standing he was pleased to forsake me up- " on a bare suspicion, I cannot think of suf- " fering him to enter into an engagement " with another person, whilst I am alive and " single. Distressed circumstances, and vari- " ous other incidents, have been the occasion " of my assuming the name of Bond, to " which I have no claim; but he will know

" per-

" perfectly well who I am, when I have the
" honour to ſubſcribe myſelf,

" Madam,

" Your obliged humble ſervant,

" FRANCES LOVEILL."

Nothing could equal the aſtoniſhment of Mr. Norris when he had finiſhed this extraordinary letter. " Do you know this perſon?" ſaid Mrs. Stapleton. " But too well," replied he; " what ſhe ſays is undoubtedly true, " and I know not well how to get over her " claim; but of this I am convinced, that " when you hear the hiſtory of that tranſ- " action, you will not only acquit me of any " deſign to deceive you, but will not won- " der if the circumſtance of my letters " being in the poſſeſſion of this abandoned " woman had ſlipped my memory." Mrs. Stapleton ſaw no appearance of deceit in his countenance, and begged he would acquaint her with every particular. He began with informing her, that Sir Charles and Governor Beville were already perfectly well acquainted with this tranſaction; and then proceeded to tell her the literal facts, as they are recorded in the firſt book of theſe Memoirs.

During the recital, Mrs. Stapleton recovered her ſpirits ſufficiently to be much diverted

ed with many parts of it: ſhe could not help comparing the unexperienced eager young man, with the ſedate, conſiderate perſon before her; and, to ſay the truth, ſhe ſaw ſuch a natural goodneſs of heart in the former, as was, in her eſteem, no leſs amiable than the more ripened qualifications of the latter; in ſhort, ſo far was this incident from leſſening Mr. Norris in her eſteem, that, by ſhewing the goodneſs of his diſpoſition at all times of his life, it rendered him more dear to her than ever. She was ſo far from blaming him for having been deceived, that ſhe would have accuſed him of a want of ſenſibility if he had eſcaped the ſnare laid for him, and would have thought the unſuſpecting open-heartedneſs of a young man, very ill ſupplied by the prudent caution of an old one. She was of opinion that every age has its peculiar qualifications, and even virtues, and that they loſe great part of their value, by being confounded or miſplaced. She was, in ſhort, thoroughly ſenſible of the juſtice of that obſervation of Yorick's in that *Journey*, which is of more value than all the voyages and travels which ever were journalized, (which obſervation, by the way, would have ſounded ten times better, if the author had found or invented an expreſſion for it, which had not a certain indelicacy

delicacy of idea annexed to it) "*If a man has* "*not a certain cullibility in his nature, ſo much* "*the worſe.*"—Perfectly convinced therefore of Mr. Norris's worth, and more than ever charmed with his character, all her conſideration was turned upon the means of extricatting him and herſelf from this difficulty, which had ſo unexpectedly ſprung up to impede an union which had every proſpect of felicity attending it.—The moſt obvious means which occurred to her, was to try if the univerſal panacea might not reach the caſe, that is to ſay, whether a good ſum of money might not prevail on her to relinquiſh her claim, from which ſhe could not hope, in the end, to reap any other benefit: and this ſhe was the rather inclined to believe would have the effect, becauſe the woman, by dropping a hint in her letter, of her being in diſtreſſed circumſtances, ſeemed to point out this natural way for Mr. Norris to take of relieving both her and himſelf. But Norris, who well knew the malignity of her diſpoſition, could not help being of a different opinion. He knew that ſhe had a ſufficient ſhare of that diabolical glee which riſes from the thoughts of tormenting; and that, though intereſt might have ſome ſhare in this miſchievous claim, the pleaſure of diſappointing, or at leaſt protracting, the hap-

happineſs of a man who had diſappointed her, had probably a much greater; and, in this view, he ſaw more difficulty in compromiſing the affair, than Mrs. Stapleton was aware of; for he was too good a maſter of the human heart not to know, that a regard to intereſt may be ſatisfied, but a thirſt after revenge never. In ſpite therefore of all Mrs. Stapleton could ſay to encourage him, he was very much diſconcerted, and could not help fearing a tedious delay to the completion of his wiſhes.—Another cauſe alſo concurred to make his ſituation very uneaſy to him, the fear of the conjectures which would be made amongſt his acquaintance with regard to this ſudden delay of a match which they were in daily expectation of ſeeing compleated. To hope to keep it a ſecret, when it was known to a millener and a chambermaid, was to hope to conceal the ſun-riſing; and to hope to have the real cauſe known and believed, without any miſrepreſentations to the diſadvantage of either him or Mrs. Stapleton, or both, was as vain; he was therefore apprehenſive, and not without reaſon, that ill-natured people, and probably the woman herſelf, would not be backward in raiſing reports which it would give him pain to ſuffer, and which, at the ſame time, it would not be poſſible to contradict. Mrs. Stapleton

pleton attempted both to reaſon and laugh him out of theſe apprehenſions: "With regard to "yourſelf," ſaid ſhe, "your character is too "well eſtabliſhed with thoſe who know you, "to be hurt by any reports which a diſap- "pointed and violent woman can raiſe; and "with regard to me, I hope I am nearly in "the ſame ſituation; but if not, I live, Mr. "Norris, to my own heart, and as long as "that does not reproach me, I ſet very flight- "ly by the opinion of the world, from whom "I have nothing either to hope or fear."

Norris applauded the juſtice of her ſentiments, and endeavoured to imitate her unconcern, but without effect. In this perplexity it was agreed between them, that the firſt ſtep ſhould be to conſult Sir Charles on the affair; and if he would have the goodneſs to undertake it, to put the whole management into his hands, as he would probably be able to conduct it with more coolneſs than Mr. Norris himſelf might; for, to ſay the truth, he found himſelf too much exaſperated againſt the woman, to be ſure of keeping his temper within the bounds which prudence might require. With this view he went home to conſult Sir Charles. He found him and young Mr. Barker together; and as the long intimacy which he had had with the latter,

ter, gave him a right to his confidence, he entered into a detail of the affair to them both. Sir Charles was entirely of Mrs. Stapleton's opinion, that the woman could have no other end in view, than extorting a ſum of money, which he was alſo of opinion it would be neceſſary to comply with; to which Norris, though with ſome reluctance, agreed, provided Sir Charles would undertake the management of the affair, that he might not be under any neceſſity of ſeeing her. Sir Charles very willingly undertook to talk with Miſs Loveill, and for that purpoſe propoſed ſending for her to his houſe the next day; and, as Mr. Norris himſelf had declared againſt ſeeing her, he begged Mr. Barker would give him his aſſiſtance. Mr. Barker, who had been intent upon examining the letter which Mrs. Stapleton had received, very readily promiſed his aſſiſtance; but as he had a very particular engagement for the next day, begged the conference might be poſtponed to the day following. Mr. Norris, who was on thorns till it was over, wiſhed him to wave his engagement; but as he ſaid it was of ſuch a nature, that it was impoſſible to defer it, Norris was obliged to ſubmit to the little delay, and the day but one following was accordingly fixed for the meeting.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Concluſion of the Adventure.

THE next day Sir Charles himſelf wrote a letter to Mrs. Bond, or, as ſhe again choſe to call herſelf, Miſs Loveill; wherein he told her, that his friendſhip for Mr. Norris had induced him to take the trouble of converſing with her upon the ſubject of a claim, which, though he little expected ever to find revived, he was nevertheleſs conſcious had ſome foundation; but as an affair of this kind could not ſo properly be diſcuſſed by letter, he begged to ſee her at his houſe the next day, at whatever hour ſhe would appoint.

To this letter ſhe ſent a very pathetic anſwer; apologizing for ſuch parts of her paſt conduct, as ſhe was conſcious Mr. Norris, and therefore Sir Charles, knew wanted it; and perſiſting in her affectionate regard for Mr. Norris, to which ſhe imputed her having conſtantly perſevered in a ſingle ſtate, tho' often much preſſed to change it, by thoſe who would have removed her out of the neceſſity

ceſſity of earning her living by labour; of all which ſhe promiſed to give Sir Charles a more ample account the next day, at five o'clock in the afternoon. Sir Charles ſent Mr. Barker the hour of appointment, and was rather ſurpriſed to hear that he was gone out of town. Before the appointed time, however, he arrived. Sir Charles had given orders, that as ſoon as the lady came, ſhe ſhould be conducted into the library, within which there was a little dreſſing-room, whither Mr. Norris choſe to retire; for, though he did not care to encounter her himſelf, his curioſity and anxiety made him wiſh to be witneſs to what paſſed upon the occaſion.

Soon after the hour appointed Miſs Loveill arrives, was conducted into the library, and in a few minutes Sir Charles came to her. Knowing her character, he could not help being ſtruck with the decency of her appearance, the humility of her look, and the elegance of her manner. "I am ſorry, Ma-
"dam," ſaid he, "to have the neceſſity of
"introducing myſelf to you upon an affair
"which cannot be pleaſing either to you or
"myſelf; but my friend has deſired me to
"undertake a taſk for him, to which he
"found himſelf unequal." She made ſome civil reply with regard to Sir Charles's cha-

racter,

racter, and concluded with an air of ſurpriſe; "Am not I, Sir, to have the ſatisfaction of "ſeeing Mr. Norris?" "No man," replied Sir Charles, "Mrs. Bond, loves to ſay an "uncivil thing to any lady leſs than Mr. "Norris, much leſs to a lady who once gave "him reaſon to think well of her." The reply was equivocal; and the door opening at that inſtant, ſhe roſe in a hurry, as if expecting to ſee Mr. Norris; but upon Mr. Barker entering, and Sir Charles introducing him to her as another friend of Mr. Norris's, ſhe ſat down with a viſible diſappointment in her countenance, and from that inſtant her whole air and deportment was changed: the affected humility which ſhe had aſſumed diſappeared in an inſtant, and ſhe began to talk, not in the ſtile of one who ſolicits a favour, but of one who makes a demand. "I ſee, "gentlemen," ſaid ſhe, "that I am to ex-"pect no favour from Mr. Norris: after "all the injuries he has done me, he even "has the barbarity to refuſe to ſee me. "Well, be it ſo.——I muſt then rely "upon the juſtice of my claim; and as "long as I am in poſſeſſion of his letters, I "am not afraid that his abilities, or the coun-"tenance you, Sir Charles, are pleaſed to "ſhew him, ſhould ſcreen him from the "law."

" law." " Pray, Mrs. Bond," ſaid Sir Charles—" Before you proceed in your que-
" ſtion," interrupted ſhe, " I muſt beg leave,
" Sir, to inform you, once for all, that I have
" no title to that name, though I have, for
" particular reaſons, gone by it for ſome
" years; my name, Sir, is Loveill."———
" Pray, Madam," ſaid Mr. Barker, " may
" I take the liberty to aſk you how you came
" at firſt to take the name of Bond?"
" Why, Sir," replied ſhe, " when your
" friend Mr. Norris, after entering into the
" moſt ſolemn engagements with me which
" can bind a man to a woman, except that
" at the altar, thought proper, upon the
" pretence of ſome innocent gallantry be-
" tween me and a young man of faſhion, to
" whom my family had obligations, to deſert
" me in the moſt barbarous manner, and take
" every pains to ruin my reputation, as well
" as my comfort; I found that he had ſuc-
" ceeded ſo far in his endeavours, as to exaſ-
" perate thoſe, who were diſpoſed to be my
" friends, againſt me, to ſuch a degree, that,
" in a little time, I found myſelf in diſtreſſed
" circumſtances, without a friend in the
" world who would give me any aſſiſtance.
" They who had diſapproved of my connec-
" tion with him, and who, before that, were

" both

"both able and willing to aſſiſt me, made "that an excuſe for throwing me off; and "others, who had no ſuch pretence, turned "even his cruel neglect of me to my diſad-"vantage, by ſaying, that if I had not, ſome "how or other, behaved ill, he would never "have forſaken me. In this dreadful ſitua-"tion, which you ſee, Gentlemen, was en-"tirely the conſequence of my unhappy at-"tachment to him, I found it neceſſary to "apply to ſome means for a livelihood. The "ſkill I had in needle-work, ſuggeſted the mille-"nery branch, as the moſt probable reſource; "and I accordingly got myſelf recommended "to Mrs. Cooke, at Bath, to work journey-"work. But, from a latent ſpark of pride, "which, in people not meanly deſcended, "no meanneſs of circumſtances can extin-"guiſh, I was not willing to appear under "my own name in a rank of life ſo much "below what I had been accuſtomed to." Mr. Barker ſighed; ſhe miſtook his motive, and thought it a token of ſome riſing compaſſion: ſhe therefore, by way of encouraging him not to ſuppreſs it, pulled out her handkerchief and proceeded. "Think, Sir, think, Gentlemen, "how cutting a thing it muſt be to be ſhun-"ned by all your acquaintance, and bring a "diſgrace, by a mean employment, upon a

" family which has lived with diſtinction in " the world; 'tis worſe than poverty itſelf." Mr. Barker ſighed again. Bravo, thought ſhe, and wiped her eyes. " Think, Gentle- " men," continued ſhe, " of the miſery of " ſuch a fall, and you will not be ſurpriſed " that I wiſhed, if poſſible, to conceal my- " ſelf under a borrowed name. It is to that, " and that only, that I owe the name of " Bond, which was the firſt name that hap- " pened to occur, and which is the rather " remarkable, as I do not recollect that I " know any perſon of the name amongſt all " my acquaintance." Mr. Barker, at the concluſion of this laſt ſpeech, felt ſome emo- tions which he found it difficult to ſuppreſs, but they did not ariſe from pity. " Accord- " ing to your account, Madam," ſaid Sir Charles, " you have met with ſome hard- " ſhips, which, however, I can by no means " think you have any right to attribute to Mr. " Norris." " No, Sir!" exclaimed ſhe with violence: " Was it not owing to him " that I loſt——" " Let us not be warm, " Mrs. Loveill," interrupted Sir Charles; " I ſhall not now enter into any inquiry up- " on what grounds it was that Mr. Norris " declined purſuing his connection with you; " it is ſufficient to ſay, that he is determined

" to

" to keep to the reſolution he made many
" years ago of never ſeeing you more: what
" uſe therefore do you intend to make of his
" letters? and what are your expectations
" from him?" Tears of paſſion now took the place of thoſe which ſhe had ſqueezed out as incitements to pity. " I know, Sir Charles
" Beville," cried ſhe; " I know that you,
" Sir, think I am to be bribed to part with
" what I have a juſt claim to, and that mo-
" ney is my view in offering this claim at
" ſuch a time. You are miſtaken, Sir, it
" is not money I want; I am ſtill, poor as
" you may eſteem me, in a ſituation to give
" Mr. Norris as much uneaſineſs as he can
" give me; and be aſſured, Sir, that no pal-
" try conſideration of intereſt ſhall ever in-
" duce me to give up that power. Mr.
" Norris, Sir, you may inform him from me,
" ſhall never marry where his heart leads
" him; I, Sir, will for ever forbid the banns;
" and if he perjures himſelf to obtain a li-
" cence, I will perſecute him through every
" court of juſtice with all the rigour that diſ-
" appointment can urge." " I would be
" glad," ſaid Mr. Barker, " to aſk Mrs.
" Bond———" " I again tell you, Sir,"
cried ſhe, " that I have no ſuch name."
" Till I have as good reaſons, Madam," re-

plied Mr. Barker, "for calling you by any "other name, as I have for calling you by that, "I ſhall give you no other." He ſaid this with ſo penetrating a look, that the lady, who had looked upon Sir Charles as the principal perſon, and till that inſtant had paid very little attention to Mr. Barker, began to be a little ſtartled: ſhe looked earneſtly at him, and aſked him, not without ſome heſitation, "Pray, Sir, who—who are you?"—"My "name, Madam," replied he, "is Barker, "and poſſibly in one of theſe courts of judi-"cature, to which you threaten to apply for "relief againſt a man whom you have ſo "highly injured, you may ſee me again. I "am, Mrs. Bond, a very free ſpoken man, "therefore you muſt not think of going, "Madam," (for ſhe was beginning to move, poſſibly from a preſentiment that Mr. Barker had ſomething diſagreeable to ſay to her) "before "I have told you a little of my mind. I have "liſtened, with great patience, though not "leſs indignation, to your ſtory; in which "you have, with the moſt unparalleled ef-"frontery, thrown the effects of your own "ill conduct upon Mr. Norris. I will not, "Madam, deſcend ſo low as to recapitulate "any of the actions of your vile life, with "the whole of which, however, you may be

"aſſured

" aſſured I am thoroughly well acquainted:
" only your claim upon my friend concerns
" me, and to that only I ſhall therefore con-
" fine myſelf. What might have been your
" motives for daring to ſet up a claim,
" which you have not the leaſt ſhadow of a
" pretence to ſupport, I cannot tell; it may
" be revenge, in which you will be diſap-
" pointed; it may be money, in which you
" will be more diſappointed. I am ſo well ac-
" quainted with the circumſtances of your
" claim, that if a ſhilling would purchaſe
" Mr. Norris's promiſſory letters from you,
" he ſhould not give it." During this ſpeech, ſhe ſat in the moſt perfect aſtoniſhment; nor was Sir Charles without ſome degree of wonder; for as he was ignorant of the grounds that Mr. Barker went upon, he could not gueſs what was his deſign. Mrs. Bond at length recollected herſelf, and began to ſuſpect that poſſibly this behaviour was meant to intimidate her; to which ſuſpicion ſhe was the more encouraged, from conſidering the mild way in which Sir Charles had treated her, which ſeemed calculated to try firſt to compromiſe matters: confirmed therefore in her ſuſpicion, ſhe began an anſwer in a very high tone and ſtile; which Mr. Barker preſently put a ſtop to, by ſaying, " Look ye,

" Mrs.

"Mrs. Bond, I cannot pretend to anſwer "ſuch a torrent as I ſee you are going to "pour out, without ſome aſſiſtance; but be- "fore you proceed to inſiſt upon your claim "to Mr. Norris with ſo much vehemence, "you will do well to find ſome means of "getting rid of that which a gentleman, "whom I brought this morning with me "from Stoney-Stratford, lays to you." Upon ſaying this he opened the door, and calling, "Pray, Sir, walk this way," in walked the very identical Mr. Bond, whom we left ſome time ago playing *Chamont* at Stoney-Stratford; who, ſtepping up to the lady, told her, in the true accent of *the country*, "My dear ſoule, "it's myſelf that is very glad to ſee you, "when I found that I had loſt you ſo long." The rage, the aſtoniſhment, the confuſion of the lady, could be equalled by nothing but the ſurpriſe of Sir Charles, who was quite unacquainted with the diſcovery Mr. Barker had made: nor did the tranſported Norris find it an eaſy thing to confine himſelf in his dreſſing-room; but, as he thought there might be poſſibly even more danger in encountering Mrs. Bond now, than there was before, he ſuppreſſed his joy, and continued to lie *perdue* till ſhe was gone. When Sir Charles had a little recovered his ſurpriſe, he turned to Mr. Bond,

Bond, and ſaid, "Sir, you have, by a ſtrange "accident, diſcovered your wife: ſhe has "been much to blame in this tranſaction; "but as ſhe is now ſettled in a good way of "buſineſs, poſſibly kind uſage, and a decent "proviſion, may bring her to reflect, and ſee "the error ſhe has been guilty of; in which "caſe you may aſſure yourſelf you ſhall not "want my future favour. You would do "well to quit your rambling life, and ſettle "to ſome more reputable way of procuring a "maintenance, and then you ſhall not want "my protection. As to you, Madam, I do "not expect your ſpirit to ſubſide in an in-"ſtant; but whenever you can bring your-"ſelf to deſire your miſconduct to be forgot-"ten, I am very ſure neither Mr. Norris nor "his friends will wiſh to remember it." Mr. Barker and he then retired, and left the huſband and wife at liberty to return home together or ſeparate, as they could agree the matter between them.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Concluſion of the Book, with the Reader's Aſſiſtance.

IT will be eaſily imagined that Mr. Norris's acknowledgments to Mr. Barker, for his care and ingenuity in the management of this diſcovery, could be equalled by nothing but his ſurpriſe at it. It was, indeed, no wonder, that the name of an itinerant player, whom they had never ſeen before, and never expected to ſee again, ſhould not ſtrike either him or Sir Charles. But Mr. Barker, who had known him before, and had learnt his hiſtory from his own mouth at Stratford, as alſo that of his wife, no ſooner heard that this lady, who ſeemed, from Mr. Norris's account of her, to be an *Avanturiere*, had gone by the name of Bond, than it immediately ſtruck him that this muſt be the wife of his *quondam* acquaintance: but, leſt he ſhould be miſtaken, he determined to ſay nothing of his ſuſpicion, till he was confirmed in the truth of it. Upon the ſtrength of this, when he left Sir Charles and Mr. Norris, he went directly to

Mrs.

Mrs. Bond's; and, under pretence of beſpeaking ſome ruffles, he got ſo full a view of her perſon, as to be able to deſcribe it with ſome degree of certainty. He then immediately ſet out for Stoney-Stratford; and, by ſingular good fortune, found that the company had not left the place; and, which was ſtill more unexpected, that Mr. Bond had not left the company. He deſcribed the lady ſo exactly to her huſband, that he had not a moment's doubt of her identity; nor, when he heard the comfortable way in which ſhe was ſettled, had he a moment's heſitation with regard to accompanying Mr. Barker to town, in order to take poſſeſſion of the goods and chattles which he was informed ſhe was poſſeſſed of, by the favour probably of thoſe friends, of whom he was apprehenſive ſhe had too many. Whatever objection, however, he might have to the friends, he had none at all to that part of their friendſhip which conſiſted in making good preſents. Without therefore paying the leaſt attention to the diſtreſs the company would be in for ſomebody to ſupply his place, in the very travelling dreſs in which he was prepared to play Archer, he ſet out for London with Mr. Barker, and made his appearance, as we have ſeen in the laſt chapter; by which he relieved Mr. Norris from the moſt uncomfortable

able dilemma he had ever experienced in the courſe of his life. It will be eaſily imagined alſo that Mr. Norris loſt not a moment in acquainting Mrs. Stapleton with this unexpected ſucceſs of the negociation; and that not only ſhe, but all their friends, felt the greateſt joy at finding nothing more to impede the celebration of two weddings, which promiſed an addition of happineſs to every individual connected with any of the parties more immediately concerned. In ſhort, every thing that remains will be ſo eaſily imagined, that it goes very much againſt the grain to tell the ſagacious reader what he can juſt as well tell me. To ſay the truth, there is nothing more difficult than to wind up a ſtory of this kind with any tolerable degree of ſatisfaction to a reader, when the way is made ſo plain to him, all difficulties removed, and all projects gathered to a head; ſo that he can no more miſtake what he is to come to, than he can his way from Hyde-park-corner to Kenſington. And for this reaſon, I take it for granted, that the laſt chapter of a novel, and the laſt ſcene of a play, are never read or attended to.—If any thirſty reader, therefore, like the honeſt politician, who always began with the title of his News-paper, and ended with the printer's name at the bottom, ſhould get as far

far as this page, I beg he will be courteous enough to lend me his aſſiſtance: and, as deſcribing of wedding ceremonies is not ſo much my talent as it was Mr. Richardſon's, let him be ſo good as take the two brides and the two bridegrooms, together with Sir Harry and Lady Clayton, Mr. Barker, Mr. and Mrs. J. Barker, Governor Beville, and, if he has occaſion for them, Lord Timon and Lady Mary, and Lady Mary Warren, Sir Charles's couſin; and, after having marſhalled them in as many coaches as he thinks proper, convey them ſafe to St. George's church, and from thence, either to Sir Charles's or Sir Harry's houſe, in either town or country, whichever pleaſes him beſt; and then let him ſit down, think over all his acquaintance, and find a group of happier people if he can.

FINIS.